

Honneth and Everyday Intercultural (Mis)Recognition

Work, Marginalisation and Integration



Bona Anna



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Integration

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This book is dedicated, with grateful thanks, to the Pacific Islanders who generously gave of their time and reflections during the course of research.

Foreword

Bona Anna's book is remarkable in many respects. It marks a substantial development in contemporary social research, a great performance for any PhD project. The book achieves this by integrating several, well-defined, and fairly independent fields of contemporary social theory, constructing a comprehensive analytical model with their help, and applying the model fruitfully to an area of Australian social life, the experience of recognition and misrecognition at work of migrant populations from the Pacific. This is an outstanding example of interdisciplinary theoretical work and indeed of how to use theoretical reflection successfully for in-depth empirical investigation. For me, who had the privilege to work closely with Anna on her PhD, together with Amanda Wise, our colleague from Sociology, another remarkable aspect was to witness how she was able to achieve all of this despite the major setbacks life threw in her way during her candidature. Today her research appears in the form of this outstanding book. I am incredibly proud and full of admiration for her accomplishments as an emerging scholar.

In order to construct a valid investigative framework that would do justice to the experiences of Pacifica workers in contemporary Australia, Anna has brought together three relatively distinct theoretical literatures: recognition theory, as it has been developed by Axel Honneth; everyday multiculturalism, of which Australian researchers and Amanda Wise in particular have been key proponents; and contemporary reflections on work, following the ground-breaking writings of Christophe Dejours. The book demonstrates in striking fashion how fruitful a transgression of disciplinary boundaries can be, when it is done with the scholarly care and thoughtfulness that Anna brought to her project. Many scholars working on social issues pay lip service to interdisciplinarity. Yet more often than not, no sooner are methodological decisions to be made and substantive claims examined than professional and disciplinary fences re-emerge, and one hears, for instance, sociologists accusing philosophers of essentialism and philosophers deploring the lack of conceptual rigour in

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empirical inquiries. Anna's book provides a wonderful example, and a lesson in intellectual modesty and seriousness, to the researchers working on social issues who do believe in interdisciplinary research. Her book shows that it can be done, how it can be done, and what results can be expected from it.

In each of the fields that she mobilises to conduct her research, Anna produces significant insights. I will only highlight a couple, relating to the fields I have also studied. Anna analyses the experiences of recognition and misrecognition of Pacifica workers, using the general framework deployed by Honneth in his writings of the 1990s, as well as his successive contributions to the philosophy of work. An important outcome of Anna's analyses for recognition theorists will be the fruitfulness of an Honnethian approach for direct empirical research. Even though Honneth's work is situated in the field of "critical theory", which in principle is to bring together philosophy and social-scientific inquiry, there is to this day very little positive application of his ideas to empirical projects. This book fills an important void in this respect. For all the critics of recognition theory on the side of the social sciences, who accuse the philosophical model of being blind to the fluidity of social experiences and the complexity of social identities, it will provide a substantive rejoinder, one performed not by decree but by deed.

In relation to theorists of work, Anna's research brings out in particularly sensitive fashion the ambiguity and intricacy of demands for recognition that underpin work experiences for individuals who live in a majority culture that forces them to navigate multiple and often divergent cultural norms. This is a significant insight because it shows that theorists of work need to be careful to not assume overly hastily that Western, modernist norms are universally used in specific experiences of work, notably in defining the recognition of work contributions or how well one does one's job. Despite this complexity, Anna's analyses provide a strong empirical validation of the claim that recognition of and within the working activity is central to individuals. Indeed, her book shows that the question of how the centrality of work is experienced and interpreted by individuals with attachments to cultural worlds whose defining value systems do not overlap points to an important problem of our contemporary world, one that deserves more historical, cultural, and sociological

inquiries. Finally, this inquiry highlights the significance of “the work of community-care” for the migrant population Anna studied. This is another fascinating dimension coming out of her research.

I am sure that many readers will benefit from this book in many different ways. Scholars working in the diverse fields of contemporary social research will find much to gain, methodologically, empirically, and conceptually, from the brilliant synthesis of truly interdisciplinary methodology and empirical research. Interested readers outside of academia will gain deep insights into the constitutive experiences of a significant migrant population in contemporary Australia, a society which, in many respects, serves as a model of successful integration for other multicultural countries.

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Arohanui
Bona Anna

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Chapter One

Intentions, Themes, Participants and Structure

Intentions

Two related intentions motivate the writing of this book. The first intention constitutes a critical investigation into important questions regarding everyday intercultural recognition and misrecognition in the context of paid work, using as theoretical foundation the recognition model developed by German social and political philosopher Axel Honneth. In pursuing this cross-cultural inquiry through a recognition lens, the book fulfils a second purpose in that it provides a largely positive assessment regarding the productivity and value of Honneth's approach in cross-cultural scholarship. Through the application of recognition theory in a study of intercultural phenomena, the book addresses deficits related to these two intentions in the multiculturalism and recognition fields.

To begin with the multiculturalism arena, scholars and researchers in this field draw on a wide range of theoretical resources to generate insights into the complexities and tensions associated with ethno-cultural difference, the incorporation of minority groups and societal integration. Amongst this breadth of conceptual input, however, there has been little concerted engagement with Honneth's theory, perhaps because it is considered by some to be insufficiently elaborated for practical application in

intercultural inquiry. The present work specifically utilises recognition theory in an empirical cross-cultural study, one that is based, moreover, on an everyday multiculturalism research design. In employing these conceptual tools, drawn in this case from the sphere of esteem recognition at work, the book highlights Honneth's conceptualisation of individual and social integration as a process of inclusion through 'stable forms of recognition'. This unique approach differs significantly from the traditional multiculturalist view of integration as proceeding via a process of inclusion through forms of group representation and participation. The book argues that Honneth's theory offers a way forward, or at least a more sophisticated approach, regarding some of the impasses that this classical multiculturalist understanding has generated. It makes the case for the increased application of the recognition model in approaching some of the crucial questions regarding the inclusion and integration of minority ethno-cultural groups in multicultural society, especially groups that have been traditionally marginalised.

Meanwhile, in the field of recognition, Honneth has always intended that his theory be applicable to the social sciences, and there is growing interest amongst scholars in applying it in a wide range of fields including criminology, disability, education, health, mental health, social work and work. In the recently published *Recognition Theory as Social Research* (O'Neill & Smith, 2012), Smith (2012a) specifically argues for a social research programme that offers theoretical elaboration and practical application of the recognition model. The individual authors who contribute to this edited volume go on to demonstrate the utility of Honneth's oeuvre, but none specifically focus in the multiculturalism area. Furthermore, in the emerging hub revolving around the concept of misrecognition, exemplified by Thompson and Yar (2011b) cross-cultural phenomena also remain largely unaddressed. This project specifically applies recognition theory in critical intercultural research, arguing that Honneth's model provides a firm theoretical grounding and unique, but as yet largely bypassed, tools for descriptive, explanatory and normative analysis in this important field.

Of Honneth's considerable conceptual offerings, this study employs resources particularly related to the sphere of esteem recognition and to

work. From the sphere of esteem recognition, the project draws on two key concepts, namely, 'social esteem' and 'contested value horizon'. In terms of the field of work, the analysis utilises Honneth's three critical conceptions of paid employment and recent developments of them offered by work and recognition theorists. These three conceptions, based on Honneth's understanding that employment constitutes a core category of individual and social integration and is thus central to relations of recognition, are 'recognition of the performance and product of working activity', 'recognition of achievement at work' and 'recognition of contribution to the social exchange of goods and services'. Employing the two key esteem recognition concepts and anchoring critique in the norms inherent in the three critical conceptions of work, the book provides an in-depth analysis of intercultural relations of recognition in paid work contexts. Relations of recognition are broadly defined as the complex set of relationships, facilitated across connected intersubjective, local, societal and global contexts, through which recognition and misrecognition, shortened to (mis)recognition in the text, is mediated.

The recognition model employed in this text is augmented by a rich literature drawn from several disciplines. Honneth's theory works at a high level of abstraction so as to define the normative structural conditions of human self-realisation. But as well, in his schema, it is lived experiences of disrespect that are understood to damage the mutual intersubjective recognition on which individuals depend for the development of positive self-relations and autonomy. These two quite different levels, the theoretical and the phenomenological, require the researcher to devise suitable mid-level conceptual frameworks when using Honneth's theory in the analysis of empirical research. The book provides such mid-level analytical elaboration, specifically in the intercultural field, by drawing from literature in anthropology, cultural studies, human geography, psychology, social psychology and sociology. This conceptual input is congruent with Honneth's own project, given that he drew crucial empirical insights from some of these disciplines in the development of recognition theory.

Ultimately, a negativist methodology and an emancipatory ethos lie at the heart of Honneth's work, and this recognition-based intercultural

project is imbued with that tradition. Specifically, it illustrates a process whereby members of a distinctive ethno-cultural group in Australia, in this case Pacific Islanders, see their understandings of the social norms of work marginalised in the situated contexts of employment. Indeed, the critical analysis identifies some of the practical ways in which submersion in the dominant value tradition, or value horizon, shapes experiences of everyday cross-cultural misrecognition, or denigration, for workers from this minority cultural tradition. It also casts a light on some of the negative consequences such transcultural misrecognition holds for the possibilities of social esteem and thus, following Honneth, for the adequate development of positive self-relations and autonomous agency, as well as for the collective sense of solidarity. The critical misrecognition lens also reveals forms of resistance expressed by Pacifica workers in relation to their interests and rights, and also in terms of their contestation of dominant value traditions as they are expressed in the domain of paid work. It is self-evident, then, that this Honneth-infused exposition is formulated as a critique oriented towards emancipatory ends in the multicultural sphere. The writing points towards the redress of cross-cultural injustice and therefore, in a wider socio-political context, the possibilities of more nuanced *and* more robust social integration processes in ethnically and culturally diverse societies. This stance is in step with the direction of much critical multicultural and recognition scholarship. As Smith (2012c:89) notes in regard to the recognition arena, “The ultimate point of social research framed by the theory of recognition is to remove obstacles to autonomous self-realisation”.

Themes: Work, Multiculturalism and Recognition

This book, then, brings together the three themes of multiculturalism, recognition and work. The first two themes are self-explanatory, given the project’s intention of applying recognition theory in intercultural inquiry, while the third theme, paid employment, emerged organically during research fieldwork. The initial discussion which follows centres on the theme of work, opening out later towards a focus on the other two themes, multiculturalism and recognition.

Work

During the research process for this book, empirical fieldwork gathered large amounts of rich qualitative material regarding many domains of everyday human endeavour. However, it was decided that a concentrated lens on just one of these spheres would be most likely to produce an in-depth exploration of cross-cultural relations of recognition. Ultimately it was the domain of paid employment that emerged as the most promising, with two factors in particular influencing the decision to follow the work theme.

The first factor was theoretically oriented. It relates to Honneth's recent firming up of the realm of paid work as pivotal for recognition, and therefore for subjective and social integration. Honneth (2010:223–224) argues for the centrality and intrinsic value of work beyond instrumental rationality, noting that 'the majority of subjects continue to attach their social identity primarily to their role in the organised productive process'. His argument is supported by other scholars, many of whom understand work as embedded in social and institutional contexts which take it beyond mere economic or technical operations (Lamont, 2000:26; Svendsen, 2008:2; Vallas, 2012:6; Zurn, 2010:16). As Steven Vallas (2012:6) puts it, work is "consequential for human life". However it is important to note here that, over time, Honneth has shifted the location at which a normative critique of work might be conducted—from recognition of the performance and product of work activity itself, to esteem recognition of individual achievement at work, and now to recognition of contribution to the social exchange of goods and services. These different critical conceptions of work, and their developments by recognition and work specialists, are important theoretical and normative resources informing the book's analytical framework, and will be fleshed out in Chapter [Four](#).

The second and more salient factor regarding the decision to focus on the domain of paid work relates to the way in which this theme imposed itself, so to speak, early on during research fieldwork. From the beginning employment featured prominently, partly because the research programme included work-related questions and partly because the Pacific Island research participants inevitably narrated stories regarding the

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search for jobs as significant aspects of their migration journeys. However, beyond these elements, paid employment and its absence were ‘hot topics’, a fact that bears out Honneth’s inclination towards the centrality of work for the possibilities of individual and social integration. At times, the Pacific Islanders endorsed employment as a positive source of recognition and fulfilment. More often than not, however, respondents associated Pacifica people and work negatively, or expressed a complex juxtaposition of recognition and misrecognition in employment contexts. Furthermore, they described some of the ways in which these negative perceptions shaped a prevailing sense of denigration, social fragmentation and poor life chances in the Pacific Islands diaspora. Australian research into, or commentary on, issues impacting the well-being of the Pacific Islands community echo these viewpoints (Hodge et al., 2007:v/3; Pacific Islands Community, Family and Youth Development Program (PICFYDP), 2007:31–32/44–52; Sawrikar, 2009:41–43; Va’a, 2003:12–13/26; Vasta, 2004). Overall, the participants’ experiences and reflections highlighted three important aspects of cross-cultural (mis)recognition at work: the ethno-racial denigration of Pacifica workers; the association of Pacifica people with low levels of training and employable skills, low-status occupations and unemployment; and finally cultural differences regarding specific work practices in the work organisation. These three modes of (mis)recognition at work frame the analytical chapters of the book and will be further developed in Chapter [Four](#).

The following narrative is drawn from a fieldwork interview with Kate, a woman of Polynesian ancestry. It is presented here because it shows, in exemplary form, the way in which the theme of work emerged during interviews and linked to the other two themes, recognition and intercultural relations or multiculturalism. The extract will be followed by a discussion regarding the connections between these three conceptual threads of the book, and the complex knot of questions which emerge from that discussion.

My husband had a pretty traditional, you know, upbringing in the (Pacific) Islands. He was beaten quite a bit. Didn’t go to school, you know. Wasn’t allowed to go to school. Had to stay home and look after his grandfather. And I

think he feels a bit bad because, you know, he doesn't have any qualifications, as in like Western qualifications, so he couldn't get a good job (when he first migrated to Australia). I think he feels a bit ashamed. ... I said (to my husband), just compare yourself to your family. He was the least (likely) to succeed or be, you know, have anything. But he now has a really good job. It's a technical job (and) doesn't require those kinds of qualifications. He's very good at that sort of thing (technical work) and it pays well. I've got this responsible job (indicating workplace office). ... I'm employed here as a Pacific Islander (Pacific Islands case worker in the organisation). ... We have a house and cars, so those kind of things. Really, we're Pacific Islanders but we live pretty Western (laughs). And our children. ... They're doing really well. They did good in their schooling here (and) have good jobs. And they're very family orientated. They always put family first. Well, almost always (laughs). Whereas he (my husband) looks at his sisters now. Their children are not doing so well. (They are) unemployed, living on benefits, having children themselves and they're very young. Two of them have gone off the rails, (got into) trouble with the police. They're struggling.

Previous to this narrative, Kate has been reflecting on aspects of her life as a Pacific Island migrant and now permanent resident in Australia. As her thoughts turn to her husband, a powerful theme emerges which, in line with the focus of this book, is framed as a search for recognition and respect through work. Kate refers to the topic of paid employment five times in this short excerpt, namely, her husband's previous unsatisfactory work, his current top quality job, her responsible position, their grown children's good jobs and his sister's children's lack of employment. A sense of inadequacy regarding education, qualifications and 'a good job' is encapsulated in the words, "I think he feels a bit bad ... I think he feels a bit ashamed". As a means of addressing this pervasive feeling of denigration and thus building stronger personal esteem through work, Kate encourages her husband to seek comparison. This strategy brings to mind Veblen's original concept of 'invidious comparison' (Veblen, 1899; Cole & Stewart, 2001). It highlights some of the ways in which migrants and those from marginalised groups may struggle with the demands of the majority recognition order in a way that members of higher status groups may not, and thus resort to various modes of normative reassurance in relation to everyday reputation, status and honour. In this case, Kate's notion of comparison involves complex and dynamic layers of identifica-

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tion (Nederveen Pieterse, 2007:32; Noble et al., 1999:29–32). At an individual level, Kate coaches her spouse to compare his current situation with his start in life. Beginning with a ‘traditional Pacific Islands upbringing’, which lacked much in the way of a formal education, he now ‘holds down a well-paid technical job’ in which he appears to excel. Involving a second family-oriented layer of identity, Kate encourages her husband to consider contrast with his sisters. Here is a Pacific Island man, starting out with few advantages, whose family success in Australia compares favourably with that of his siblings and their families.

At a third layer of identification, that of ancestral and ethnic origins, Kate proposes comparison within the Pacifica diaspora. As with most migrant communities, Pacific Island families make everyday assessments regarding those who are successful and those who are struggling in the adopted homeland. Kate is proud that her family is achieving the common aspirational goals of the migrant, better education, good jobs, material assets and financial security. These are all signs of a fruitful ‘living pretty Western’, to use Kate’s turn of phrase. Indeed, participants in this research emphasised the esteem sought and received from diaspora and homeland groups regarding one’s family ‘doing well’ in their countries of migration. It is possible to identify some of the cultural repertoires that underlie recognition of a Pacific Islander ‘doing well’ or ‘staying on the rails’ in the West, even while complex transnational processes shape continuous change and interpretations vary, particularly across migrant generations. These repertoires highlight educational achievement to secure a good trade or profession; an adequate income which can support generous remittances to kin in the islands; priority given to family, extended clan and collective; respect for the customary authority of elders; and the demonstration of godliness which is usually expressed through strong commitment to a Christian church (Hodge et al., 2007:v; Horton, 2012:2396–2397; MacPherson, 1997; Manley et al., n.d.:1–2; PICFYDP, 2007:8/46–47; Sawrikar, 2009:41–43; Sydney Local Health District, 2012; Va’a, 2003:31).

However a fourth level of comparison, comprehensible through an intercultural lens, is also implied in Kate’s advice to her husband. Hanging in the air of her “just compare yourself to your family” is the implication of a broader contrast between Pacific Islanders and Westerners. There are

at least two juxtaposed ways of viewing this wider comparison between the Pacific and the West. While these categories are multilayered and fluid, evermore so in a globalising world, Kate and her husband enact subjective codes of ethno-cultural comparison which make sense to them in their everyday lives. As members of the Pacifica diaspora, their measures of success are likely to include some evaluation of the migrant's inclusion in the wider society. In this regard, Kate seems simply to position her family as successfully integrating into mainstream Australian life. However, there emerges a simultaneous but veiled sense of ethno-cultural deficiency in her words. The contrast is subtle, but there is a sense in which Kate seeks to offset the negativity implicit in direct comparison with the mainstream group, underpinned as it is by perceptions of Pacific Islanders as 'problem migrants', by encouraging instead differentiation within the Pacifica collective. In other words, her husband is more favourably positioned by equating himself with 'others like him', that is, family members and ethno-cultural peers, rather than with those who embody greater (White Australian) social, cultural and occupational capital. Thus while these compensatory esteem strategies may be achievable in the diaspora context, they are only partially successful in the wider social context.

These are cross-cultural conundrums. In theory at least, Kate's husband's contribution is no less valuable because his job does not require prerequisite 'Western' qualifications. However, lived experience appears to tell him otherwise. His perception, and those of other Pacifica participants in this research, raises important questions. What are the social mechanisms whereby work categories are differentiated, attracting esteem recognition on a sliding scale with some jobs at the lower end actively denigrated? How are distinctive cultural interpretations mediated in the reference system regarding the worth of an occupation? Which group's perspective dominates in relation to the constitution of 'a good job' and what power dynamics are at play in the muting of other voices? How does the occupational hierarchy intersect with other processes of inequality, especially in this case those of race, ethnicity and culture, and to what effects? Relatedly, what are the contours of ethno-racial misrecognition in the specific social context of the workplace? In what ways are cultural differences regarding work practices mediated in a work organisation?

Overall, what impacts does cross-cultural marginalisation have on the norms of paid work, and how do those affected respond?

The book will explore this complex knot of recognition and employment issues as they pertain to the intercultural workplace. As previously noted, the analysis employs a recognition framing rather than taking a more conventional multiculturalist approach. The difference is important, because it is proposed that Honneth's model offers a more sophisticated means of addressing some of the intractable problems of classical multiculturalism. The following section presents a brief background regarding the emergence of multiculturalism, before focusing in on some of its problematic features. This discussion will lead us towards Honneth's recognition theory and the rationale for employing it as theoretical backbone for this inquiry into intercultural (mis)recognition at work.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is a complex and contested discourse. On one level, as Nederveen Pieterse (2007:2–3) argues, multiculturalism is 'the demographic condition of multi-ethnicity and cultural cohabitation, a common societal condition throughout history'. In contrast to this general feature of human history, however, the relatively recent emergence of multiculturalism can be understood as the institutionalisation of multi-ethnicity within the context of increasing global migration and indigenous revitalisation in post-colonial societies originally established on the presumption of territorially defined monoculturalism, that is, in the space of a single national culture into which all citizens assimilate (Amin, 2012:1; Goldberg, 1994:3–6; Kivisto, 2002:1–9; Mishra, 2012:23; Reitz, 2009a:3). In this contemporary sense, multiculturalism as theory, political policy and ethical social practice has claimed racial, ethnic and cultural diversity as a 'societal good'.

Arising within a constellation of post-war social movements, multiculturalism's driving force has been the positive valuation of ethnic diversity and 'restitutional justice' for minority cultural groups (Mishra, 2012:2/12). Multiculturalists have advocated for the social and political recognition of diverse group identities and ways of life embedded in and sustained by 'culture', although the categories of race, ethnicity and cul-

ture are often blurred in, and complicate, such claims (Mishra, 2012:10). Parekh (2006:2–3) defines the ‘culture’ in multiculturalism as “a body of beliefs and practices in terms of which a group of people understand themselves and the world and organize their individual and collective lives”. In a more critical frame, Modood (2007:5) claims that contemporary versions of multiculturalism constitute “the political accommodation of minorities formed by immigration to western countries from outside the prosperous West”, thus highlighting its hegemonic aspects. Hage (1998:231–247), meanwhile, argues that multiculturalism has been largely co-opted by Western governments as a means of managing the politics of ethno-cultural diversity.

Multicultural policies and practices have been dispersed across Western societies, and variously implemented in accordance with local conditions and to address specific controversies. In the United States, multiculturalism is largely associated with civil rights and educational reform, while European multiculturalism has tended to aim at legislative and administrative adjustments to meet the needs of ethnically diverse populations (Jupp, 2002:84–85; Mishra, 2012:22–38; Murphy, 2012:1–10; Nederveen Pieterse, 2007:3). The Netherlands version upholds the need for social cohesion while asserting the right to unique cultural identities, and in Canada cultural rights are constitutionally enshrined (Jupp, 2002:91; Mishra, 2012:23). In the United Kingdom, Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, the state funds equal opportunity while celebrating cultural diversity and promoting mutual tolerance (Phillips, 2007:3–7; Reitz, 2009a:5–7). In Aotearoa New Zealand, multiculturalism is complicated by the official bicultural status of the nation (Kesley, 1996:185; McIntosh, 2001:151; Pearson, 1996). However, despite differences in orientation, at the heart of the discourse lies a concern with the integration of multicultural societies, particularly issues related to cohesion, inclusion, exclusion, power and equality (Mishra, 2012:2). Much empirical, theoretical and philosophical work has been devoted to addressing the complexities and dilemmas inherent in the discourse of multiculturalism, as is noticeable by the references cited above and the selection included here (Banting & Kymlicka, 2006; Castles et al., 1992; Kelly, 2002b; Kymlicka, 1995, 2001, 2007; May, 2002; May et al., 2004; Modood, 2005; Parekh, 2008; Reitz et al., 2009; Robinson, 2007).

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However, classical multiculturalism presents some difficult issues at the theoretical, policy and practical levels. A fundamental epistemological problem is inherent in multiculturalism's understanding of groups as ethno-cultural entities, this understanding having been founded on the presumption of the existence of an inherent or 'quasi-primordial' identity (Basch et al., 1994:32; Fraser, 2010:215; Mishra, 2012:7/101; Werbner, 1997:6; Yuval-Davis, 2010:266). For example, setting out to comprehend the Pacific Islands or the Anglo-Celtic identity and cultural perspective is to proceed as though a stable distinctive core existed. Concepts of socially constructed and historically contingent identity, human agency, cultural melding and cultural change confound this type of essentialist thinking. Moreover, well-intentioned as they are, multicultural policies can inadvertently defend an ethno-cultural group's internal illiberal structures and practices (Mishra, 2012:100; Poata-Smith, 1996:113). Complex tensions have emerged, 'multiculturalism's double bind' (Nagle, 2009:5), regarding the balance to be struck between a culturally neutral, liberal defence of equal treatment and an identity politics which leads to the defence of special treatment (Gutmann, 1994:5; Kelly, 2002a:5–15; Phillips, 2007:1–8; Robinson, 2007:3–6; Sloan, 2009:35; Vasta & Castles, 1996:11).

Furthermore, mainstream multiculturalism has tended to be articulated somewhat idealistically, even simplistically, in terms of tolerance, enrichment, diversity, belonging, inclusion and 'rational intercultural dialogue' (Parekh, 2006:340–342; Reitz, 2009a:1; Taylor, 1994:64). As Reitz (2009b:158) notes, optimistic assumptions regarding human behaviour do not necessarily hold up in day-to-day interethnic relations. Indeed, the institutionalisation of these ideals can lead to the suppression but not the elimination of racist and other discriminatory practices, and might well leave existing power dynamics intact (Hage, 1998:15–26; Mishra, 2012:ix; Sloan, 2009:35–41). Everyday multiculturalism, the research approach adopted in this project, offers a way of addressing the 'unrealism' inherent in mainstream multiculturalist discourse, as well as the practical confines of the idea of essentialised identities. The everyday multiculturalism perspective brings a critical lens to the ways in which individuals from diverse racial, ethnic and cultural heritages express multiple identities, negotiate complex differences and influence one another

in dynamic everyday contexts. Moreover, in focusing on the phenomenological and relational aspects of cross-cultural encounters, everyday multiculturalism shares significant parallels with Honneth's recognition theory. Some of these similarities of perspective are fleshed out in Chapter [Three](#) of the book.

Recognition Theory

In contrast to classical multiculturalism, Honneth's recognition theory offers a different means of addressing the cross-cultural work-related questions posed earlier. The ethos informing classical multiculturalism, its many hues and the various recognition of identity politics that it encompasses, is ultimately the promotion of social inclusion and integration. Situated as he is in the Critical School tradition, Honneth (1995a, 1995c, 1995f, 2007a) also speaks for an emancipatory ethos and a just world. The strength of his approach, however, is that it provides a way around some of multiculturalism's inevitable theoretical and practical impasses, as they have been outlined above. A fuller elucidation of the main features of recognition theory is developed in the following chapter. However, a brief initial summation is provided in this introductory chapter because the contrast between mainstream multiculturalist and Honneth's understandings of recognition is a crucial distinction in this book, and in need of emphasising from the start.

Honneth's core premise is that reciprocal intersubjective recognition, or positive acknowledgement between subjects, is essential for the development of positive self-relations *and therefore* for self-realisation and autonomy (Honneth, 1995f). Positive self-relations are those modes in which a subject relates to herself or himself and which must be minimally progressive for the person to be able to engage practically with the environment, in particular the social environment. Honneth distinguishes between three core self-relations, self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem, each of which is developed and maintained through a specific form of intersubjective recognition. Self-confidence is understood to develop through love recognition in the intimate sphere of family and friendship (need affirmation, practical care and emotional support), self-respect is maintained through the recognition of a subject's rights in the

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civic or legal sphere (cognitive respect), and self-esteem concerns the sense of self developed through the recognition of talents, achievements and contributions in the social or cultural sphere (social esteem). It is these positive self-relations, as sustained by adequate forms of social approval or recognition, that constitute *the* conditions for the possibilities of healthy identity, self-realisation and autonomy. Honneth (2001:50–51) defines self-realisation as “the unforced pursuit of freely chosen aims in life”, noting that the descriptors ‘unforced’ and ‘free’ imply not only the absence of “external pressure or influence” but just as crucially “the absence of internal blockages, psychological inhibitions and anxiety”. As can be seen from this very brief outline, ‘identity’ in Honneth is not synonymous with the same term used in classical multiculturalism. Under Honneth, identity designates the psychological existential sense of self developed by subjects in their social dependency on mutual recognition, and that is the point.

It is in the third sphere of social esteem or solidarity that this intercultural project is situated. As sketched above, Honneth offers a way of conceiving of cross-cultural respect and disrespect, and emancipatory politics more widely, by linking social esteem with self-esteem and therefore with the possibilities of positive identity and autonomous selfhood. The concept of the ‘contested value horizon’, outlined below, is crucial in this regard because it is understood as mediating social approval of individual abilities, achievements and contributions, leading to positive self-esteem, in modern value plural societies. Using this link between social esteem and self-esteem, via a contested value horizon, intercultural critique can focus on a group’s submersion in the normative and symbolic order and the consequences of that submersion for the sense of social merit developed by the group’s members, their cultural and psychological opportunities for self-realisation and autonomy, and the group’s sense of social solidarity. It can also identify emerging challenges to the dominant value traditions at work as a result of disappointed expectations of recognition. Honneth especially views esteem recognition at and around paid work as being particularly important for individual and social integration. While it is not the only type of recognition relations that matter, esteem recognition through work holds special significance for integration from several points of view. These perspectives will be fleshed out in Chapter [Three](#).

In terms of integration, multiculturalism and Honneth are both based on a 'culturalist model of social integration' (Deranty, 2009a:303–304). Culture here is understood as constituting the normative and symbolic resources that contribute to the construction of subjective identities. In a multiculturalist understanding, where the recognition of ethnic identities and minority cultural groups prevails, individuals are defined first by their distinctive ethno-cultural identity and engage in social transactions on the basis of that pre-existing identification, even if over time that identity is questioned and modified. Culture and society are thus viewed as distinct from one another, and the problem is that of their reconciliation in modern ethnically mixed societies (Deranty, 2009a:303–304; Parekh, 2006:343–344). Honneth, on the other hand, theorises culture as the way in which different social groups interpret core societal norms, for example equality, liberty and justice, which are shared by all groups in the society. He comprehends the conflicting and competing interpretations of these key ideals as contestations over a society's 'value horizon', understood as a flexible framework of values orientation (1995f:126). In other words, culture constitutes the distinctive interpretations of fundamental norms which different social groups and classes bring to the contestation of a society's value horizon. Honneth's critical concern is therefore not with the recognition of minority cultural groups and their identities as such, as in a multiculturalist framework. It is with the fair inclusion or integration of minority groups' interpretations of society's core goals, fluidly constituted as these are, in a value horizon dominated by majority social groups. From this viewpoint, idealistic notions regarding multicultural reconciliation are inadequate because the value horizon is understood as permanently contested. Overall, Honneth perceives social integration as intrinsically unstable, a fragile balance achieved between groups with access to different levels of power, who compete to see their collective interpretations of society's normative and symbolic order in the ascendant.

As a critical theorist, Honneth is particularly focused on providing descriptive, explanatory and normative tools to diagnose the negative impacts of deficient modes of recognition, and their consequences for subjective identity and autonomy. Through its focus on the relations of recognition in the sphere of social esteem or solidarity, his model provides

a viable alternative, in both practical and theoretical terms, to multiculturalist approaches for the empirical investigation of intercultural phenomena, especially in their negativistic forms. This book engages in such a project, specifically in relation to the cross-cultural work-related questions that were posed earlier, and in that sense is in a position to offer some evaluatory commentary regarding the value of Honneth's approach in the intercultural field of study.

A Summary of Intentions and Theoretical Position

This book offers a critical exploration of everyday intercultural (mis)recognition at work, applying the recognition model developed by Axel Honneth to do so. Specifically utilising Honneth's concepts of esteem recognition and contested value horizon, and anchoring critique in the norms inherent in his three critical conceptions of paid work and developments of them by work and recognition specialists, it analyses some of the ways in which marginalisation in the ascendant value horizon shapes workplace misrecognition experienced by Pacific Islanders living and working in Australia. The analysis concentrates a lens on the damaging consequences of such misrecognition, and thus the possibilities of self-realisation and autonomy, for members of this minority ethno-cultural group. It also identifies nascent contestation of dominant value traditions at work initiated by Pacific Islanders, as a result of disappointed expectations of recognition. The book also represents an opportunity to demonstrate the productivity of applying Honneth's recognition framework in cross-cultural inquiry. With its differentiated approach to the problems of social inclusion, and more specifically in this project its emphasis on the importance of esteem recognition at work, recognition theory presents a compelling set of conceptual tools and more sophisticated means of addressing some of the impasses of multiculturalism, in both practical and theoretical terms. Indeed, the book will argue that Honneth's model offers a solid theoretical foundation and unique, but as yet largely overlooked, resources for descriptive, explanatory and normative analysis in critical intercultural scholarship.

This first section of the introductory chapter has presented the book's intention of investigating (mis)recognition in the cross-cultural work-

place as it is experienced by Pacifica workers, and in the process assessing the value of Honneth's critical recognition approach in intercultural inquiry. The next section provides a background to the Pacific Island research participants on which the book's empirical insights depend.

The Research Participants

The empirical material for this project was sourced from Pacific Island migrants living in Australia and the background description that follows bears relevance, in one way or another, to the historical and current social, economic and cultural circumstances of these people. The Pacific, sometimes loosely referred to as Oceania, comprise up to 30,000 mostly small islands dispersed over 165.25 million square kilometres of ocean (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2013). The name Pacific is thought to derive from Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan's naming of the South Seas in 1520 as 'Oceano Pacifico', meaning 'Peaceful Ocean' by comparison with the Atlantic Ocean (Spate, 1977:205–206). This naming serves to highlight the region's history of European domination from the fifteenth century (Chappell, 1999; Henningham, 1995:1–5; Senft, 1998:119; Wesley-Smith, 1999). Pacific Islander is the generic term used to describe the ancestry of people who, starting 4500 years ago, began migrating progressively eastward from South China to settle some of the islands of the Pacific (Thomas, 1999). While preserving many aspects of a common social and linguistic heritage, distinctive differences developed between island groups over time (Hunkin-Tuiletufuga, 2001:197–198). Through colonial processes, the Pacific Islands were eventually grouped, not without contestation, into three broad areas, Micronesia, Melanesia and Polynesia), based on perceived ethno-cultural and linguistic similarities (Connell, 2003:41). The Pacific Islands population exceeded 10 million in 2011 and is estimated to grow to 15 million by 2035, which means that approximately the equivalent of the population of Samoa (188,000) is added to the total each year (Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2013).

In the well-known *Our Sea of Islands*, Hau'ofa (1993:6–11) claims that the inhabitants of Oceania have historically operated a culture of fluid migratory networks and cultural borrowings across what is commonly

viewed as a set of islands connected, not separated as in the Western imagination, by the Pacific Ocean. Thus the space occupied by a society is not the island so much as the sea of islands, “a sea of possibilities, a sea of wealth” (Wassmann, 1998:21). Thousands of Pacific Islanders continue this process of mobile ‘world enlargement’ (Hau’ofa, 1993:6), originally following former colonial links across the Pacific but now circulating through the rest of the globe (Crocombe, 1989:3–19; Rapaport, 1999:270–281). Pacific Islander migration to Australasia is part of this repertoire, a traditional clan-based ‘translocality’ carried on into colonial and post-colonial times (King & Connell, 1999:9–10; McCall & Connell, 1993:1–4; Young, 2001:1–15). Such practices often have quite strategic aims, whereby the contemporary ‘transnational corporation of kin’ is predicated on the desire to maximise economic access and opportunity for Pacific Island families (Bedford et al., 2001:5; Macpherson et al., 2001:13).

In relation to emigration from the Pacific islands to Australasia specifically, personal identity and interests were originally defined “in terms of family, village, religious affiliation and national origin in that order” (Macpherson, 1996:129). While this identification order may continue to have relevance for many, immigrants from the Pacific Islands in Australia tend to understand themselves as Pacific Islanders, sometimes Pacifica people, in the broader sense. This perception is reflected in the fact that many Pacifica organisations at community, state and national levels are named generically, as is much publically available material. This stance is partly motivated by the processes of immigration, in that a homogenising identity can become an effective means for people from various Pacific Island nations to access migrant services, address discrimination and create political representation (Hodge et al., 2007:v). However, it must be acknowledged that the Pacific Islanders whose voices emerge in this book are invariably of Polynesian ancestry. A mix of independent nations, semi-dependencies and overseas territories constitute contemporary Polynesia (Levine, 2009). Due to historical circumstances and modern immigration controls, it is people from these localities, especially the Cook Islands, Western Samoa and Tonga, who constitute the most substantial migration from the Pacific region to Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics; Connell, 2003:42; Hodge et al., 2007:3) and there-

fore the vast majority of participants in this research. The terms Pacific Islander and Polynesian are used interchangeably in this book.

The notion of transnationalism captures the essence of contemporary Polynesian migration. Polynesians especially are part of mobile social networks, or as Glick-Schiller et al. (1992:12) have named them “transnational social fields”, which encompass island communities and globally dispersed diaspora, particularly in the Pacific Rim countries of Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the United States (Bedford et al., 2001:1–3; Campbell, 1990:215; Wassmann, 1998:9). But the processes of maintaining communication, cultural ties, kin obligations and business involve complex and contradictory change in contemporary times (Lee, 2011:295–306; Spoonley, 2001:83–86; Vasta, 2004:206–207). For example, Macpherson and Macpherson (1999) describe the profound ways in which Samoan diaspora and island-based communities have influenced one another over time, with changing modes of migrant kinship affecting generational politics and bringing contestation to traditional power structures. ‘Virtual transnationalism’ amongst Tongans and other Pacific Islanders is also a growing phenomenon, promoting dynamic connections and empowerment but also raising complex questions across electronic space (Morton, 1999).

Financial and in-kind remittances are institutionalised aspects of Polynesian transnational exchange (Connell & Brown, 2005). As touched on earlier, migrant enclaves have traditionally been understood as extensions of the Polynesian village and kinship systems “where members of families and villages go periodically for various lengths of time and from whence they serve their families in various ways” (Macpherson & Macpherson, 1999:277). Thus operating within social relations that exist at the village and extended kin levels, remittances represent moral obligations and affective gestures, which significantly support the livelihoods and small business opportunities of family members who remain ‘at home’ (Brown & Walker, 1995:66; King & Connell, 1999:14–15; Morton, 1999:237). There is no doubt that the remittance system has become a source of generational variance in diaspora communities (Fisi’iahi, 2001:51; Horton, 2012:2396; Lee, 2011:300; Muliaina, 2001:25/32–33; Spoonley, 2001:87–88). This is partly due to the increasing ‘nuclear family individualism’ in Polynesian societies traditionally

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based on 'extended family communalism' (O'Meara, 1993:142), and partly due to a phenomenon known as 'ceremonial inflation' (Macpherson & Macpherson, 1999:288–293). Rising disposable incomes facilitated by chain migration have seen an intensification of status competition, whereby diaspora groups compete amongst themselves to mobilise ever more material resources which their island-based kin then use to stage increasingly elaborate and expensive ceremonies. Despite generational differences, however, Polynesian remittance conventions remain economically and symbolically vital. Their significance was highlighted memorably during fieldwork for this project. At a state-level Pacific Islands forum, educational pamphlets outlining modern electronic means of remitting were specifically distributed and discussed with great humour. The humour belies to some extent the existential pressure put on the migrant, as the remittance system is not only a question of livelihood but also of cultural sustenance and indeed social connection. For many Polynesians making their living in Australia, the obligation to remit makes the securing of employment a doubly important quest.

In this regard, modern Polynesian transnationalism is driven by a complex mix of social, political and economic factors, including geographical remoteness, rising lifestyle aspirations and family reunification (Connell, 2003; Macpherson, 1997; Rallu & Ahlburg, 1999). But better educational and employment opportunities to support island-based livelihoods through the remittance system, as well as to sustain Westernising lifestyles, remain probably the most salient motivations (Horton, 2012:2396; Lee, 2007:174; Sudo, 1997a). Beginning in colonial times and once involving forced removals, Pacific peoples' chain migration in pursuit of wage labour was, and remains closely tied to, the international capitalist economy (MacDermott & Opekin, 2010:285). For example, the requirements of Pacific Rim economies for cheap labour saw migration expand significantly in the post-war period (Bedford et al., 2001:7). During this era, especially the 1970s, Polynesian migrants increasingly arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand and, often through step-migration facilitated by the 1973 Trans-Tasman agreement, in Australia (Brown & Walker, 1995:3–8; Connell, 2003:41; Hunkin-Tuiletufuga, 2001:199). More recently, a climate of neo-liberal restructuring in Pacific Island economies has led to widespread unemployment and increasing migra-

tion in search of work (Alexeyeff, 2008:136–137). Employment, then, is a central aspect of Pacifica migration aspirations and transnational processes and was quickly identified as such by research respondents. The employment traditionally secured by Pacific Island migrants is predominantly unskilled and semi-skilled (Collins, 1996:74; Horton, 2012:2397; Spoonley, 1996:67; Sudo, 1997b:4). Despite this low ranking in the occupational stakes, Pacific Islanders and especially Polynesians have sought employment and established homes in most Australian states over many decades.

While they remain a very small proportion of the Australian population (1971, 0.13%; 1991, 0.44%; 2011, 0.67%) and of Australia's settler arrivals (1971, 0.93%; 1991, 3.41%; 2011, 2.03%) (Australian Bureau of Statistics), and as touched on earlier in the chapter, the Pacific Islands diaspora is significantly over-represented in a depressingly long list of negative socio-economic indicators: under-employment, unemployment and benefit dependence, educational under-attainment, overcrowded living conditions, child protection services, domestic violence, poor health and healthcare access, crime, correctional incarceration and juvenile justice detention (Australian Bureau of Statistics; Cain, 2005:27–29; Hodge et al., 2007:v/3; Sawrikar, 2009:7–9; Va'a, 2003:12–14). Specific statistics regarding Pacific Islanders, education and employment are presented in the empirical section of the book. Efforts to address these problems are hampered by various lacks: a lack of appreciation of traditional culture and heritage especially on the part of Pacifica youth, lack of access to and understanding of mainstream language and institutional systems, lack of understanding of rights and responsibilities, lack of educational attainment, employable skills and the provision of locally based work (Collins, 1996:95; Hodge et al., 2007:v/3; Sawrikar, 2009:7–9; Sydney Local Health District, 2012; Va'a, 2003:12). Specific service provision for the Pacific Islands diaspora has intensified since 1994, partly due to concerns regarding these social issues and partly because, up until that time, Australian officialdom usually merged the Pacifica migrant community with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups (PICFYDP, 2007:2).

This brief sketch has provided something of the context in which the people who contributed to this project live and work. The Pacifica diaspora communities are real places with real people who experience their lives in

multidimensional ways. Fieldwork discovered rich cultural participation, vibrant church-based practices and complex intercultural layering, which belie the somewhat fragmented picture outlined above. But it must be said that research participants, especially those working in social agencies whose mandate it is to assist Pacifica residents experiencing difficulties, tended to emphasise disadvantage over advantage. This focus may have brought a negative skew to the material presented in the empirical part of the book, but nevertheless the data remains valid, sourced as it is from these real Pacific islanders who live and work in the research locales. It must also be said that the description of socio-economic disadvantage is not intended to paint a deliberately bleak picture of the diaspora, but rather is motivated by the social justice ethos of this book. The overall intention is to contribute to the rightful recognition and improvement in life chances of the Pacifica diaspora and other minority ethno-cultural communities, and beyond that the better integration of Australia's multicultural society.

The Structure of the Book

Chapter [One](#) has provided an introduction to the book, its intentions, themes, theoretical position, main research questions and Pacifica participants. The book is now divided into two parts.

Part One constitutes the theoretical section of the book. Its three chapters establish the conceptual and methodological foundations in which Part Two's critical analysis of empirical findings are anchored. Chapter [Two](#) elaborates the central features of Honneth's recognition theory as the theoretical underpinning of the book. It also focuses briefly on critiques of Honneth, provides an outline of scholarly applications of recognition theory and expands on the discussion, introduced in this chapter, regarding some of the ways in which Honneth's concepts are useful in multicultural research. Chapter [Three](#) offers a brief introduction to everyday multiculturalism as the book's research approach, establishes four compatibilities between that approach and Honneth's theory, and presents coverage of the research methodology. Chapter [Four](#), a shorter bridging chapter, connects the concepts of work, recognition and multiculturalism, establishes a critique of workplace intercultural (mis)

recognition drawn from Honneth's three critical conceptions of work and, employing these concepts, delineates the categories that frame and anchor the three analytical chapters in Part Two.

Part Two constitutes the empirical section of the book. Its three chapters analyse intercultural (mis)recognition as it is experienced by Pacifica workers in Australia, basing critical analysis on the conceptual foundations established in Part One. Chapter [Five](#) addresses intercultural (mis)recognition shaped by ethno-racial identification or the perception of 'who one is at work', Chapter [Six](#) focuses on intercultural (mis)recognition regarding 'what one does for work', that is, the status of a paid occupation and its associated duties, while Chapter [Seven](#) addresses intercultural (mis)recognition inherent in 'how one practises at work', that is, the work tasks and activities as they are framed by the work organisation.

Chapter [Eight](#) summarises the findings of the research, as well as attending to important conclusions regarding culturally specific interpretations of the norms of work. It also offers evaluative commentary regarding the validity and viability of Honneth's recognition model in the fields of multiculturalism and everyday multiculturalism and makes suggestions for further research that might build on the offerings of this book.

Part One

The Theoretical Section

Chapter Two

Recognition Theory, Critical Social Inquiry and Multiculturalism

As the underpinnings of this intercultural work, recognition theory was briefly sketched in the introductory chapter. Chapter Two, the first of the three chapters that constitute the theoretical part of the book, now offers a more comprehensive treatment regarding the central features of Honneth's model. It begins with an initial focus on the theme of recognition, goes on to render the two distinct but inter-related premises that constitute Honneth's recognition theory and ends with a brief discussion regarding critique of Honneth relevant to the focus of this project. The key point of delving into recognition theory at this depth is to highlight its descriptive, explanatory and normative prospects for critical sociological inquiry, such as is offered in Part Two of the book. These prospects are dealt with next, including an excursion into scholarly applications of Honneth's model in various social science fields. Finally, the chapter takes a more detailed look at the use of recognition theory in critical intercultural research. Specifically, it expands on the concepts of esteem recognition and contested value horizon, first glimpsed in Chapter [One](#), fleshing out their relevance for this cross-cultural project and for research into multiculturalism more generally.

The Theme of Recognition

Some deep breaths are required when wading into the rich and complex world of recognition. Meer, Martineau and Thompson (2012a:133) note that the literature on recognition is “vast and overlapping, and hence not easily categorized into distinctive bodies of thought”. This section provides the briefest of introductions to the theme of recognition, its rise to prominence via Hegel, subsequent fields of application and main theorists. The intention is to lead us towards the singling out of Honneth’s theory of recognition as the most suitable for this intercultural study into work experience.

The theme of recognition has historical precursors going back to classical Greece, but modern conceptions originate in the philosophical tradition of German Idealism, in particular the work of Georg Hegel (1770–1831) (Williams, 1997). Hegel’s core insight is that individual identity is dialogically produced through reciprocal intersubjective recognition. “Self-consciousness exists in itself and for itself, in that, and by the fact that it exists for another self-consciousness; that is to say, it *is* only by being acknowledged or ‘recognized’” (Hegel, 1949:229). This passage encapsulates the basic Hegelian idea underlying recognition theory, the idea that the relationship to another consciousness is a constitutive condition enabling the self to develop a relationship to itself. From this perspective, the relation between subjectivity and intersubjectivity is central, in that the self can relate to itself only by recognising, and being recognised by, another. This condition makes the development of subjectivity, and thus self-realisation and autonomy, dependent on recognition from other subjects.

This Hegelian concept of recognition has a tremendous legacy in contemporary thinking. Indeed, regarding its ‘overarching moral category’, social philosophy generally acknowledges a ‘recognition-theoretical turn’ (Klikauer, 2016:39–40). The recognition concept has been applied and contested in diverse fields such as philosophy, French phenomenology, developmental psychology, object-relations psychoanalysis, academic feminism and multiculturalism (Ikäheimo, 2010:343; McBride & Seglow, 2009:7–9; Thompson, 2006:3; Zurn, 2010:3). Meanwhile, Thompson and Yar (2011a:1) note that the idea of recognition has been utilised to comprehend the formation of individual psyches, the dynam-

ics of political struggles, the nature of moral progress and the articulation of a normative conception of justice. Overall, theorists (Meer et al., 2012a:133–136; Seymour, 2010b:1–2) tease out overlapping disciplinary domains that are represented in contemporary treatments of recognition, with each containing significant internal diversity. These are the concepts of recognition within post-Hegelian political philosophy, the notion of recognition in the alienation/emancipation tradition of Frankfurt School critical theory, which also draws from Hegel, and the politics of recognition and group representation within classical multiculturalism debates. Given this diverse legacy, it would not be overstating the case to say that the term ‘recognition’ has many definitions. In the context of this book, however, and while acknowledging debates regarding the presumption of mutuality, that to be recognised by another presupposes that one recognises the other, it is defined as “the mutual acknowledgement that individuals or groups give to one another” (Seymour, 2010b:4). This definition is deceptively simple. The idea of mutual acknowledgement between subjects points to complex relations of recognition that have far-reaching moral and practical implications, some of which are addressed in this work specifically with regard to cross-cultural recognition.

Three influential theorists, Nancy Fraser, Axel Honneth and Charles Taylor, are particularly associated with contemporary notions of recognition (Thompson & Yar, 2011a:4). Their seminal writings were shaped in the early 1990s with, it seems, little productive dialogue amongst them at the beginning (McBride & Seglow, 2009:7). This circumstance may have added to the confusion that tends to be associated with the concept of recognition. However, in the post-Hegelian tradition, Fraser, Honneth and Taylor are aligned in understanding subjective identity as dialogically formed through processes of mutual recognition and thus recognition failure as a critical social concern (Klikauer, 2016; Thomas, 2012:454). Despite their common Hegelian roots and emancipatory ethos, however, there are differences among Taylor’s, Fraser’s and Honneth’s positions. For Taylor (1992), recognition claims have legitimacy when the claimants’ capacities to exercise basic rights, rational autonomy and/or distinctive group identities are impeded. More or less in sympathy with this viewpoint, Fraser (1995) locates misrecognition in social status

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inequality across gender, race and class, contrasting this kind of misrecognition with economic mal-distribution and arguing for redress in terms of parity of participation and transformation of socio-cultural values. Meanwhile Honneth's theory of recognition, considered by some scholars the most comprehensive (Roessler, 2012:72; Zurn, 2010:4), brings a very different perspective to the debate. For an in-depth comparison of the theories of Taylor, Fraser and Honneth, refer to Thompson's 2006 publication, *The Political Theory of Recognition*.

Alone among recognition theorists, Honneth establishes a theoretical link between intersubjective recognition and the possibilities of subjective well-being. For him, the development of positive self-relations, those essential elements constitutive in the formation of healthy identity and the independent self, is contingent upon the structural conditions that facilitate mutual intersubjective recognition in diverse life-world spheres. Misrecognition, as a deficiency or denial of such recognition, then crucially matters in that it erodes the possibilities of progressive self-relations and therefore self-realisation and autonomy. Critical social inquiry that takes its cue from Honneth can focus on the existing conditions of recognition relations to analyse the prospects of, and barriers to, subjective autonomy and well-being, and thus emancipatory justice, in a given context. In other words, Honneth's general philosophical thesis leads to concrete analytical tools for social science to diagnose the causes of injustice and the possibilities of redress.

Honneth's is undeniably a comprehensive theory, presenting as it does a unique take on identity formation and descriptive, explanatory and normative force. His conceptual offerings hold promise for a broader and more complex analysis of (mis)recognition and constitute the justification for employing the model in this book's critical intercultural inquiry. As sketched in the introductory chapter, Honneth's conceptions of identity and recognition are markedly different from those typically assumed within the multicultural literature. Whereas multiculturalist calls for the recognition of distinctive racial, ethnic and cultural identities are claims for the recognition of an already defined identity, for Honneth, recognition is constitutive in the very formation and structure of identity. We return to this key distinction later in the chapter, to further explore the

ways in which mainstream multiculturalism and Honneth's Frankfurt School tradition denote different understandings of recognition. Before this though, let us delve into the main features of recognition theory and its application in critical sociological inquiry, beginning with a focus on the central concepts of respect and disrespect.

Axel Honneth's Recognition Theory

Respect and Disrespect

Noticing groups of Pacific Island youths hanging out in the local shopping mall and down by the train station on late shopping nights during fieldwork, I gain an immediate and tangible sense of a marginalised group struggling for recognition. Disaffection, defiance, anger, hurt, staunchness hit one full on as one walks by. These are the troublesome young people, the 'social problems', staking out their territory in the public domain. They clutter up the pavement and subtly blockade the way, necessitating for pedestrians a negotiation around or through their midst, from whence they stare with varying degrees of menace. They make their presence felt in no uncertain terms, they swagger, they talk and laugh loudly, they boast in jocular fashion, conscious of the atmosphere of spectacle and intimidation that is created. The message seems to be 'We're somebody in this society too. You don't respect us. You don't give us a place. But no worries, we're taking it anyway'.

This is a well-worn scene in numerous low socio-economic, migrant and indigenous neighbourhoods in Australia and elsewhere. Noble (2007) observed similar behaviour during research into the shift from adolescence to adulthood experienced by second-generation Arabic-speaking young men in south-west Sydney. Employing the notion of 'protest masculinity' (Connell, 1995:109–118; Poynting, Noble, & Tabar, 2003), Noble views such functioning as a bid for respect and dignity, compensation for 'the hidden injuries of class and race' experienced by marginalised migrant youth. "This (swaggering masculine) style bound them (the migrant youths) together and defined them against those they saw as withholding respect from them and undeserving of their respect" (Noble, 2007:334). These young people from minority ethnic backgrounds chal-

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lenge the existing social order and proffer an alternative group-specific hierarchy of respect, at least in the local setting.

The concern with respect is fundamental, its social desirability the breath that motivates much philosophical and sociological endeavour. Comparison between two academic books on the subject of respect and disrespect uniquely symbolises the value of the recognition model. In his 2004 book *Respect: The Formation of Character in an Age of Inequality*, sociologist Richard Sennett explores the complexities and difficulties of negotiating mutual respect across social inequality. He argues that respect and esteem in the modern meritocracy are aroused through success, self-sufficiency and the helping of others. The problem is that many who are unable to achieve these attributes do not receive the respect that should be given to them. A lack of respect and esteem, “though less aggressive than an outright insult, can take an equally wounding form. No insult is offered another person, but neither is recognition extended; he or she is not seen—as a full human being whose presence matters” (Sennett, 2004:3). Although his work is stimulating, unusual, refreshing, Sennett intentionally refrains from offering a normative conceptual framework for use in the analysis of social respect and disrespect. In presenting recognition theory, the systemic key of which is disrespect or misrecognition, as clarified in his book *Disrespect: The Normative Foundations of Critical Theory* (2007a), critical social philosopher Honneth intends just that.

Honneth originally outlined recognition theory in the 1992 German book *Kampf um Anerkennung*, which was published in English in 1995 as *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*. In an era in which the construction of normative theory has largely lost validity (Düttmann, 2000), Honneth (1995f:1) proposes “the foundations for a social theory with normative content”. His aim is to connect description, explanation and critique, based on social norms, with a formal account of ethical life and moral evolution (Deranty, 2009a:351; McBride & Seglow, 2009). The term ‘normative’ designates the presumption of the existence of social norms, that is, shared goals and agreed ethical standards in a society. This is a crucial aspect of theory for a critical theorist such as Honneth, because it is through reference to explicit social norms, or ‘normative content’, that scholarly critique can be established and ultimately

justified. It is important to appreciate that Honneth's is, at its core, an alternative theory of justice motivated by, in his words, "the desire to return to a stronger moral vocabulary in analysing the comportment of collective agents and social groups, thereby extracting this behaviour from the dominant paradigm of purely purposive-rational, strategic action" (Honneth, 2012d:137).

Honneth's comprehensive model interweaves two related premises, a formal conception of ethical life centred on the prerequisite of mutual intersubjective recognition and a framework for interpreting the development of progressive social movements centred on the idea of a struggle for recognition. The following two sections will describe the main features of these two premises so as to highlight the ways in which Honneth provides descriptive, explanatory and normative resources for the kind of social critique that this book undertakes.

A Formal Conception of Ethical Life Centred on the Prerequisite of Mutual Intersubjective Recognition

In *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*, Honneth puts forward a formal conception of ethical life based on Hegel's notion that subjective identity is formed intersubjectively. He proposes that the intersubjective basis of subjective identity makes the possibilities of positive self-relations, and therefore personal integrity, self-realisation and autonomous selfhood, dependent upon the adequate experience of love, rights and esteem recognition from others. Social conditions that adequately sustain these three modes of intersubjective recognition, therefore, constitute the prerequisites for ethical life. Let us look a little more closely at this premise, beginning with the concepts of subjectivity and intersubjectivity, and moving later to focus on the dynamics of recognition and self-relations in the three spheres of love, rights and esteem.

Subjectivity and Intersubjectivity

As anthropologist Michael Jackson (1995:118) has stated, "No human being comes to a knowledge of himself or herself except through others. From the outset of our lives we are in intersubjectivity." The Hegelian

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concept of mutual intersubjective recognition as constitutive in the formation of autonomous selfhood is the bedrock of recognition theory. In developing his theoretical model, Honneth's intention is to render Hegel's transcendental proposition relevant under modern conditions of post-metaphysical thinking (Anderson, 1995:xi). He thus draws insights from modern empirical studies in psychology and critical sociology to 'fill in' and transform the argument. To begin with, Honneth (1995f:71–107) develops proposals first put forward by American social psychologist George Herbert Mead (1863–1931), regarding the genesis of practical identity through a social process of intersubjective interaction. Mead's basic proposition is that the human being develops self-consciousness through recognition from other human beings, which, from the viewpoint of social psychology, means that s/he learns to view her/himself from the normative perspective of others. Let us delve a little deeper into this premise.

From Mead's perspective (Mead, 1934), there is no psychological self initially because the self has no immediate direct access to itself. Instead, the developing subject begins to understand her/himself as a result of being the social object of the actions of others. In other words, the view of the 'me', as self, emerges from the gradual internalisation of the third-person perspective. S/he thus appears as a self to her/himself as a result of internalising the perspectives of interaction partners. Initially, these interaction partners are those persons included in the infant's very close intimate circle. Then, as the child grows, the interaction circle gradually expands to include the more general perspectives of others as they embody social expectations, norms and values. It is through this complex process that the original 'me' of infancy is gradually generalised from a cognitive to a practical self-image, to what Mead refers to as a 'decentred position', during a child's socialisation. As the frame of reference and group of interaction partners expands, the relation of the self to her/himself, and so personal identity, expands with it. It is in internalising the external viewpoints of others, the 'generalised other' as Mead puts it, that the self comes to define and identify itself. The stages of moral development then map onto stages in the consideration of these external points of view.

Thus in Mead's social psychology, it is by appropriating the social norms of the generalised other that the subject gradually develops the abstract ability to participate in norm-mediated interactions, and in this process become an accepted member of the community. This perspective is inherently normative, even in its non-moral dimensions, because the patterns of behaviour and expectations of the external others immediately create implicit demands, which can be expressed in terms of required rules and norms. These seminal insights offered by Mead lie at the heart of Honneth's theory. Moreover, they bear all the more value for Honneth in that they overlap with intersubjectivistic concepts, which he draws from object-relations theory in the field of post-Freudian psychoanalysis (Benjamin, 1988; Bowlby, 1979; Eagle, 1989; Spitz, 1965; Stern, 1977; Winnicott, 1965). To reiterate, the relationship between the subject and the social world is inverted in intersubjective recognition. It is through *the positive recognition of others* that the social value of an individual identity is sanctioned. In other words, the perception and reaction of the other is the prime mechanism for the emergence of subjectivity, and by definition then normative obligations have pervasive influence. The crucial implication, as far as social critique is concerned, is that the subject is so thoroughly dependent on social valuing for her/his very identity and developing self-relations, that negative assessment holds potential to directly undermine the subjective sense of self-worth.

Intersubjective Recognition, Self-Relations and Self-Realisation

On the basis of Hegel's conceptual insight and its well-documented substantiation in subsequent social and genetic psychology, Honneth proposes a "philosophical anthropology of personhood" (McBride & Seglow, 2009:8). This means that, in confirming the worth of a human subject the experience of positive intersubjective recognition is formative in the development of positive practical self-relations. Honneth understands practical self-relations as constituting that fundamental core of identity without which there can be no subjective life and therefore no engagement with the world. Positive practical self-relations, developed through positive recognition from others, are thus the preconditions for the possibilities of self-realisation and autonomy. Put another way, in order to

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flourish, the self requires a core of selfhood that is sufficiently well-functioning, and such a core, as we just saw, is constituted through interactions with other subjects. Negative recognition in the form of misrecognition, recognition denial or flawed recognition, is understood as immoral and unjust *because* it damages subjects' positive self-relations and thus interferes with their possibilities of self-fulfilment and autonomous agency. This concept is the bedrock of Honneth's entire recognition model, worth emphasising from the beginning and further discussed below in the section on disrespect because the book ultimately justifies its critique on this reasoning.

As set out in Table 2.1, Honneth proposes a phenomenologically oriented typology of different types of recognition. This means that he draws a distinction between forms of recognition based on their different impli-

Table 2.1 The Relations of Recognition

Sphere of Interaction	intimate sphere	legal or civic sphere	cultural sphere
Recognition Relations	personal relations within family and friendship	rights relations within a polity or society	social relations within a community of value
Form of Recognition	love	rights	esteem
Mode of Recognition	emotional support	cognitive respect	social solidarity
Dimension of Personality	needs and emotions	moral responsibility	abilities, achievements traits and contributions
Developmental Potential	ego demarcation and socialisation	generalisation and de-formalisation	Individualisation and equalisation
Practical Self-relation	self-confidence	self-respect	self-esteem
Moral Potential	positive self-relationships—individualisation—personal integrity—self-realisation—autonomy—ethical life		
Forms of Disrespect	abuse, assault, rape and torture	rights denial, discrimination and exclusion	denigration, insult and vilification
Threatened Component of Personality	physical integrity loss of autonomous bodily control	social integrity loss of autonomy and equality	personal integrity loss of honour and dignity

Adapted from Honneth (1995f:129)

cations for subjective experience. Specifically, he delineates three spheres of social relations or interaction—intimate, legal/civic, cultural—within which three corresponding forms and modes of reciprocal recognition are progressively facilitated—love and emotional support, rights and cognitive respect, esteem and social solidarity. Each mode of recognition ideally fosters the development of a distinctive dimension of self-relation—self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem—which are understood to develop concurrently rather than in an ontogenetic sequence as such and, moreover, require ongoing maintenance through the lifespan (Honneth, 2012e:205/207/214). The last two rows of the table record the corresponding negative experiences of disrespect, which deny human beings recognition, as well as the core component of personality that is thereby threatened.

The following three sections provide a basic sketch of the dynamics of recognition in each sphere, and the process whereby each mode of recognition engenders a particular positive self-relation that ideally leads to self-actualisation and independence, while the fourth section addresses the negative aspects of the recognition model in each of the three spheres. It could be argued that, since the book's analysis is focused in the third realm of esteem recognition, it is not necessary to provide an account of the other two recognition spheres here, and indeed that doing so will lengthen the theoretical portion of the book and impede progress to the empirical chapters. However, it was decided to explicate the basic features of all three forms of recognition in this chapter because love, rights and esteem recognition are intrinsically related, and also because the full complexity and unified solidity of Honneth's model tends to be underappreciated in the social sciences. A later section will specifically hone in on the concepts of esteem recognition and contested value horizon in relation to the critical cross-cultural inquiry undertaken by this project.

Love Recognition

Honneth (1995f:95–107) theorises that the experience of love recognition, in the intimate sphere of human interaction, is indispensable for the development of self-confidence. Love recognition in primary relationships is characterised by the affirmation of needs, emotional attachment,

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mutual dependence, affective encouragement and practical care among family members, sexual partners and close friends. Honneth argues that this type of recognition is illuminated by the original intersubjective experience of love, and he again provides an empirical naturalistic rendering of Hegel's transcendental argument by drawing, this time, on the psychoanalytic object-relations theory put forward by English paediatrician Donald Winnicott (1896–1971).

Object-relations theory (Winnicott, 1965) identifies interpersonal socialisation and mutual bonds with significant others, originally with whoever functions as 'the mother', as formative in the successful psychological development of the subject. The complex interactive process, involving as it does individual self-assertion and symbiotic self-sacrifice between child and mother, results in an emotionally attached but differentiated self. The maturation of the infant leads to a situation where s/he can simultaneously tolerate, and function in, the absence of the primary caregiver, something that was initially unbearable for her/him. But this tolerance and functionality is based on the child 'knowing' that the primary caregiver will continue to care for her/him as a result of having internalised the carer's 'good enough care'. The process highlights the dependency of the subject upon a 'positive enough external other' for the purpose of developing a minimally functioning personal identity.

The original intersubjective experience of affectionate care constitutes love recognition which, retained reciprocally over time and distance, generates the foundation for a type of self-relation in which human beings acquire trust in the assertion and satisfaction of their own needs, and as a result the degree of inner freedom and self-confidence required for participation in community life. Furthermore, Honneth proposes that in facilitating the acquisition of self-confidence, love recognition constitutes the psychological preconditions for the development of all further self-relations, and thus the possibility of self-fulfilment.

Rights Recognition

According to Honneth (1995f:107–121), the experience of rights recognition in the legal or civic sphere of human interaction is constitutive in the development of self-respect. Rights recognition comprises those rela-

tions whereby subjects are recognised as equal and autonomous members of a polity or society, and although differing from love recognition, it relies on the same mechanism of reciprocity. Honneth argues that polities based on modern law are founded on the assumption whereby all participants can act autonomously with reasoned insight and moral responsibility, and thus owe their legitimacy to a rational agreement between individual agents with equal rights. A subject develops an understanding of her/himself as a rights-bearing person in the polity by taking on the perspective of the 'generalised others', acknowledging their equal status and the normative obligations owed them.

The central psychological phenomenon associated with the experience of rights recognition is the ability to relate to oneself as a legally and morally equal subject. Thus rights recognition generates the foundation for a type of self-relation in which subjects acquire self-respect. Such self-respect contributes to self-realisation through the experience of individual freedom and autonomy, guaranteed by established laws and civil liberties that are to be shared by all in the society to the same extent and with the same duties attached.

Esteem Recognition

Honneth (1995f:121–130) theorises that the experience of esteem recognition in the cultural sphere of human interaction is essential for the development of self-esteem. Beyond affectionate care and equal rights, human beings require a form of reciprocal social recognition, which allows them to relate positively to their unique abilities, achievements and contributions. Honneth (1995f:126) understands such traits as comprising a subject's manner of self-realisation, which contributes to "the practical realization of society's abstractly defined goals". In other words, this is the need to have one's contribution to the common good acknowledged. In modern societies, relations of symmetrical esteem between autonomous subjects represent a prerequisite for social solidarity. By symmetrical, however, Honneth does not mean that all accomplishments are esteemed to the same degree or that an exact comparison of the value of individual contributions is possible. Rather, symmetrical is meant in the sense that solidarity inspires "not just passive tolerance

but felt concern for what is individual and particular about the other person” (Honneth, 1995f:129). As we know from the introductory outline in Chapter One, esteem recognition is mediated through a society’s value horizon. This concept, or more specifically the concept of the contested value horizon, is crucial in the book’s intercultural analysis and will be addressed more fully in a later section of this chapter.

Esteem recognition is understood to generate the foundation for a type of self-relation in which subjects acquire self-esteem. The experience of social esteem is accompanied by a felt confidence that one’s distinctive qualities, expertise, accomplishments and contributions are valued by others as significant for shared practice, in other words, that one’s presence in the society matters. The emphasis here is on the ways in which practice, that is, ‘what one does’ or ‘the ways in which one is’, contributes to social life overall. Moreover, Honneth (2012e:207) proposes that self-esteem “requires lifelong affirmation if it is to avoid becoming weak and feeble”. The book’s investigation is set in this sphere of social esteem and self-esteem, focusing specifically on the (mis)recognition of performance, achievement and contribution in the cross-cultural workplace.

Disrespect as Recognition Denial, Flawed Recognition or Misrecognition

In the preface to the 2007 book cited earlier, *Disrespect: The Normative Foundations of Critical Theory*, Honneth emphasises the importance of the negative form of recognition, which he names ‘disrespect’, for the project of critical social theory. He writes that the experience of disrespect “constitutes the systematic key to a comprehensive theory of recognition” (Honneth, 2007a:xiii). In other words, the different branches of his recognition model all hang together around the experience of disrespect. Disrespect, that is, the experience of denied recognition, flawed recognition or misrecognition, “represents an injustice not simply because it harms subjects or restricts their freedom to act, but because it injures them with regard to the positive understanding of themselves, which they have acquired intersubjectively” (Honneth, 1995f:131). Indeed, in its more severe forms, disrespect can bring about the fragmentation of human identity. Honneth (1995f:135) describes the consequences of

such fragmentation in terms of 'social pathologies', using metaphors that reference states of deterioration of the human mind and body such as psychological death, social death, scars and injuries. Negative instances also focus attention on that other central premise of Honneth's theory, namely the struggle for recognition and the development of social movements. In this regard, he theorises forms of disrespect as the genesis of social movements, which shape progressive change in the normative social order. This premise will be taken up in the next section of the chapter.

Thus it is the experience of disrespect that teaches us first about the importance of recognition. Indeed, the serious impact that forms of disrespect can have upon the targeted individuals shows negatively how important and structuring recognition is for them. Human beings are particularly vulnerable because, as recognition theory sets out, disrespect damages the positive self-relations and therefore the possibilities of individualisation and autonomy, which subjects acquire intersubjectively via love, rights and esteem recognition. Social criticism under Honneth's theoretical direction therefore aims at describing the specific forms, causes and consequences of different types of misrecognition injuries. In this regard, the typology presented in Table 1 above identifies the particular disruption that disrespect brings to each self-relation within the three spheres of recognition.

In the sphere of love recognition, forms of disrespect are understood to threaten a person's self-confidence and physical integrity. The forms of recognition denial that are expressed in neglect of, or indeed direct attack on, physical integrity can deprive a subject of the fundamental emotional security, which, as argued above, is essential for the development of basic self-confidence. Abusive experiences can engender psychological fragmentation and even the loss of autonomous bodily control, leading to a total failure of trust in self or others and reliance on the social world. In the sphere of rights recognition, the denial of legal respect is thought to threaten a subject's self-respect and social integrity. To be excluded from equal rights is to be treated as one lacking the status of a morally responsible citizen along with all others in a polity, thus potentially damaging a subject's self-respect. Such a failure of recognition is not only unjust, but may also result in restricted personal autonomy and moral injury through

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the experience of inferiority. This is not just a political and moral problem, but also a social issue if such injustices target individuals as members of a particular social group. In the sphere of esteem recognition, a lack of respect for individual achievements and social contributions is understood to threaten a subject's self-esteem and personal integrity. Denigration aimed at a person's manner of self-realisation potentially erodes the opportunity for them to attribute value to their expertise and cultural contributions. This can result in loss of honour, dignity or social status, which may in turn diminish the sense of distinctive identity and self-respect.

The theorising of disrespect as the "withdrawal of social recognition" (Honneth, 2003:134) thus provides a foundation for theoretical and empirical inquiry into the direct implications of forms of respect and disrespect, or (mis)recognition, across varied cultural and social contexts (Martineau et al., 2012). The current project is interested in these practical implications in cross-cultural contexts, specifically the ways in which workers from a minority cultural tradition experience respect and disrespect in the sphere of esteem recognition. We will return to this sphere in a later section, where the conceptual resources relevant for the analysis of intercultural (mis)recognition at work are fleshed out.

Before closing this section, it is important to address what could be seen as a basic flaw in Honneth's conception of ethical life. Centred as this conception is on the prerequisite of mutual intersubjective recognition, the question arises as to the way in which forms of positive self-recognition can be asserted in the absence of positive recognition from others. The supposed paradox is best illustrated using the description of the Pacifica young people presented at the beginning of this outline of Honneth's theory. As described there, the diaspora youth 'hanging out' in public spaces appear to enact the message, 'We're somebody in this society too. You don't respect us. You don't give us a place. But no worries, we're taking it anyway.' This display expresses an agency that appears to draw on forms of self-respect and self-esteem, in the seeming absence of the social recognition on which such positive self-relations depend for their formation. Indeed, it is argued that the display is at least partly motivated precisely because of this felt absence on the part of the Pacific Islands young people. However, there is no real paradox in denigrated

subjects enacting types of self-respect and self-esteem. Those subjects can well have developed modes of affirmative self-relating from intersubjective interaction that involved endorsing forms of recognition, and are able to draw on these resources to cope with circumstances of recognition denial. Indeed, the three analytical chapters of this book reveal examples of Pacifica people enacting healthy self-relations in their attempts to restore a sense of agency in the face of misrecognition at work.

Others might raise the objection that Honneth's model remains wilfully formal, making its application in the social sciences a potentially difficult endeavour. Honneth does indeed define the normative structural conditions of human self-realisation at a very high level of abstraction so as to avoid a particular historical era's vision, a specific communal tradition, or indeed the authoritarianism of a more fully specified conception. Honneth (1995f:172–175) insists that it is the patterns of intersubjective recognition developed to date in a particular era or specific tradition, 'the inescapable present', which determine the substantive content of 'the good life' in each case. Furthermore, his concepts of the self and intersubjectivity, far from being monolithic, point to significant complexity. His position is that subjective identity depends upon different forms of recognition interaction with others. Indeed, one of the points of his work has been to differentiate the types of intersubjective dependency and to comprehend precisely the ways in which they impact, negatively and positively, on relations-to-self.

In summary, from Honneth's recognition perspective, the ideal ethical society embeds the conditions that enable the full and unrestricted self-realisation and autonomy of all its subjects, which in turn ideally leads to a democratically engaged and critical citizenry. Autonomous selfhood is predicated upon positive self-relations, which are themselves dependent for their development upon endorsing forms of reciprocal intersubjective recognition. Thus a formal conception of ethical life is one in which social relations are so structured as to facilitate positive modes of such recognition. But the reality of societies in which patterns of social interaction harbour forms of misrecognition contrasts with this ideal of an emancipated society. In Honneth's schema, it is the experience of disrespect or injustice associated with misrecognition that generates the pressure under which struggles for recognition can emerge within a historical

process of social transformation. This second important premise of Honneth's theory is described next.

A Framework for Interpreting the Development of Social Movements Centred on the Idea of a Struggle for Recognition

The second key part of recognition theory is dedicated to the development of social movements. Honneth (1995f, 2007b) argues that the experience of disrespect or injustice, arising from thwarted expectations of recognition in everyday life, can become the catalyst for the emergence of progressive social movements. Such movements are thus conceived of as 'struggles for recognition' and, if successful, are understood as driving society's moral development. Although this book is not specifically focused on this second aspect of Honneth's theory, an explication is provided here because the link between disappointed claims for recognition and the emergence of social movements is an essential aspect of his model. Furthermore, fieldwork did capture a muted sense of ethno-cultural injustice and embryonic contestation of the dominant value traditions as a result of what some research participants understood to be a lack of recognition at work. If co-ordinated at the collective level, this emergent impetus could develop into an ethno-cultural discourse aimed at challenging and changing normative practice, in other words, into a social and political struggle for recognition.

As described above, in Honneth's theory it is the reciprocal intersubjective recognition in the three spheres of social relations that is formative in the development of positive identity, the realised self and autonomy. However, as we have also seen, each set of recognition relations contains the potential for experiences of injustice or disrespect resulting from disappointed expectations of recognition. Honneth (1995f:131–139/160–170) argues that such unfulfilled claims can become the motivation for contestation, collective resistance and social struggle, once they have been made explicit and articulated at the level of a group or class in which individuals systematically suffer from them. This critical take on the emancipatory potential of social movements is founded on a cornerstone concept of Frankfurt Critical School social

philosophy known as 'transcendence within immanence'. This odd-sounding term captures the idea that the standards used in the critique of social reality, and to which emancipatory movements are pointing, are already located within that same social reality, at least implicitly (Honneth, 2010:227–229; Smith, 2009:47/51; Smith & Deranty, 2012a:10). On this 'immanent approach', social movements are understood as attempting to transcend, that is overcome and transform, currently existing social conditions by appealing to and, in the best of cases realising, unfulfilled moral claims, which are already present in social reality. In the recognition model, it is the moral experience of disrespect and injustice arising from unfulfilled expectations of recognition that is the 'raw material' for social movements and social action.

Honneth (1995f:161–165) theorises social movements as typically developing through a series of stages. To begin with, personal experiences regarding a lack of reciprocal recognition, or thwarted recognition, may generate feelings of moral outrage in individual members of society, although these experiences and emotions may initially remain nebulous, implicit and unarticulated. Over time, however, these same subjects may begin to articulate their experience and sense of injustice to one another so that a shared language or semantics develops. The shared semantics may open up an interpretive space whereby the individual experiences of disrespect appear as typical of the entire group, and the causes of recognition exclusion can be identified and discussed. Through this communicative interaction in everyday life, a communal questioning of the constraints on the currently accepted meanings of recognition may thereby coalesce into normative arguments and practical activity. Over time, individual and communal anticipation of changed recognition relations that would accommodate the frustrated expectations of mutual recognition may accumulate into a system of shared demands, although group agitation at this point might still remain below 'the threshold of political articulation' (Honneth, 2007b:87–90). Nevertheless, the experiences of denied recognition that had previously been fragmented, individually borne and privately endured, have become the moral motivation for a collective struggle, which may eventually surface in the public political arena in a co-ordinated way. A social movement thus emerges and builds momentum,

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making political demands for the expansion of normative recognition patterns. Once the movement has entered the political arena, public debate and contestation ensue regarding these demands. These debates may lead to the formation of a political will, which aims to expand the norms of reciprocal recognition in two ways. It may aim to extend universality, that is, extend the existing recognition forms to more subjects in the polity, or it may aim to transform the understanding of the existing norms of recognition, their scope and substantive content.

The re-emergence of Western feminism in the second half of the twentieth century is an example of a successful social movement, which can very well be read along these lines. It arose in the crucible of injustice felt by individual women excluded from equal social, cultural and political participation in society. The implicit experience of disrespect, generated by these forms of non-reciprocal recognition, was made explicit amongst women through the medium of interactive communication in feminist consciousness-raising groups during the 1960s and 1970s. The ensuing collective agitation gradually built into co-ordinated action and the articulation of recognition claims, which, in turn, surfaced eventually in the mainstream political arena. Claiming full gender equality, this new social movement became the subject of widespread public debate and has, over the decades since, forced Western society as a whole to redress gender-based injustice. Indeed, the normative pressure generated by the feminist movement has achieved expansion in the relations of recognition in all three recognition spheres, both in terms of universality and scope. From Honneth's perspective, this makes it an example of a progressive social movement.

While Western feminism is defined as progressive, it should be noted that social movements can be progressive or regressive. In this regard, Honneth's choice of the word 'moral' in the book title *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts* is significant. The term signifies that, when marginalised groups manage to articulate their experience of disrespect in the expression of suffered injustice and claims for redress, their discourse revolves around moral claims. The claims may be morally justified at this level at least, even if the means that the claimants then employ to express their grievances and, as the case may be, seek amends, are not. This moral justification stems from the fact that, in

articulating their experience of injustice, these groups are struggling against the repression or marginalisation of their particular modes of self-realisation from a specific point of view, that is, the fulfilment of needs, the adherence to rights or the acknowledgement of social contribution. As a result, the struggles of dominated social groups and the social movements that emerge from them can be viewed as collective attempts to expand the universality or scope of reciprocal recognition. Of course, the mutuality of recognition remains the central criterion in this still, so that social movements whose aims are the targeting or exclusion of other groups cannot be said to be legitimate. It might well be the case, though, that their advocates' claims of injustice are justified, even if the articulation of these claims and the goals of the movement arising from the claims are not.

Indeed, the reciprocity of recognition is central to Honneth's theory of social movements in two specific ways. As discussed above, it is the theoretical key that explains the source of social movements, that point from which a movement might emerge through experiences of non-reciprocal recognition. But as well, mutual recognition provides the norm through which to evaluate social movements as progressive or regressive, depending on whether they aim for more or less recognition for more or less subjects overall. Social movements are progressive when aiming to expand the universality or scope of reciprocal recognition and reactionary when setting out to reduce such recognition. Thus these movements are either 'accelerating or retarding moments within an overarching developmental process' (Honneth, 1995f:168). For example, conservative Christian coalitions are regressive when they refuse to support the inclusion of gay subjects in legal marriage rights. In opposing the extension of citizenship rights to immigrants, far right social movements can be understood as reactionary. Claims for the political recognition of cultural identity by First Nation movements constitute a bid for transformation in the understanding of the current norms or substantive content of recognition, and are therefore considered progressive.

Thus under the recognition approach, progressive social movements are conceived of as the main structuring force in social and moral evolution. In generating expanded modes of reciprocal recognition through struggle and conflict, these emancipatory movements engender 'norma-

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tively directional societal change' (Honneth, 1995f:93). At an ideal level, it is possible to think of a series of emancipatory movements forming 'a chain of normative ideals pointing in the direction of increasing personal autonomy and the liberation of individuality'. Individuality is liberated under this model in the sense that the restrictions on self-realisation, which were imposed on subjects in the past on the basis of their belonging to a specific social group, for instance serf, servant or women, have been at least partially lifted through successful struggles for recognition. Following the basic Hegelian insight regarding reciprocal intersubjective recognition, individual freedoms are then enhanced by the freedoms of other individuals, as they are made possible and supported by social structures and institutions. From Honneth's viewpoint, 'social progress thus proceeds via the negative path of recurring stages of recognition struggle and conflict', that is, through progressive social movements, towards 'a state of communicatively lived freedom' (Honneth, 1995f:5).

In positioning progressive social movements as the central structuring force in society's moral evolution, Honneth (2003:193) claims a "surplus of normative validity" in each sphere of recognition via which reciprocity can potentially be extended. As we know, Honneth's formal conception of ethical life rests on the general normative prerequisite that all human subjects are recognised as individuated, autonomous and equal. However, the extension of reciprocal recognition is determined by historical and cultural factors, which means that each pattern of recognition is an element of ethical life only at its current highest level of development. Each pattern of 'post-traditional ethical life' therefore contains a 'normative surplus' or the potential for expansion. In this regard, Honneth's major influences, Hegel and Mead, had predicted that the ongoing liberation of individuality and the moral evolution of society would be brought about by gradual increases in civic freedoms and legal rights, in other words, through the steady broadening of legal recognition. However, Honneth (1995f:174–178) locates a surplus of normative validity, that is, the potential for normative moral progress, in all three recognition modes, including, after initial hesitation, the sphere of love recognition.

In the original 1992/1995 presentation of recognition theory, Honneth (1995f:176) maintains that love recognition represents 'the core of ethi-

cal life' regardless of historical context or form. This being the case, the integration of affective recognition into intersubjective networks will not change its fundamental character, which means in turn that the sphere of love recognition cannot contain potential for normative moral progress. However, affective relations are characterised by a precariously balanced emotional bond and do contain latent possibilities for physical violence. To get around this problem, Honneth initially connects love recognition to the recognition of rights. He proposes that the more rights that came to be shared by those in an intimate dynamic, the more the patterns of love recognition would be freed from coercion and distortion. Indeed, in contemporary times, the intersubjective conditions that enable physical integrity include both the experience of love and also legal protection from injuries associated with love recognition (Honneth, 1995f:177). Changes made in domestic law since the 1970s are illustrative, whereby marital rape, family violence and the physical punishment of children are now criminalised in most Western nations. However, Honneth (2003:144) has changed his position, arguing more recently that the sphere of love recognition does contain the potential for normative ethical development. Thus, in intimate relationships, experiences of disrespect might eventually ground universal claims for a different or expanded kind of mutual care by appealing to previously unconsidered or newly developed needs. Examples include the mounting recognition of fathers in primary carer roles and changing expectations of children, whereby they are increasingly encouraged to pursue individual agendas free from overt gender role socialisation.

The potential of rights recognition for normative social and moral progress is especially important to Honneth. He argues that, through social struggle the sphere of rights recognition can, and has, developed normatively to increase the scope of its content, the universality of its application and its sensitivity to context (Honneth, 1995f:176–177). The development of rights has been sequential, with each new class of claims compelled by the establishment of the previous class (Honneth, 1995f:115–118). For example, the institutional entrenchment of civil rights that guaranteed liberty and protection from state interference in the eighteenth century led to the establishment and expansion of equal political rights throughout the nineteenth century. Following on the back

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of this class of claims, social rights, such as rights to education and welfare, were created in the twentieth century to guarantee the equal participation of all citizens regarding the exercise of their political rights. Modern legal recognition, motivated by inequality and exclusion experienced by certain social groups, takes the form of claims for equal rights or special rights. The 1967 legislation that included Aboriginal people in the Australian population and the 2013 granting of marriage rights to same-sex couples in Aotearoa New Zealand are contemporary illustrations of the expansion of legal rights.

However, rights recognition can have restrictive effects on recognition in the intimate sphere. For example, the family law changes that protect the rights of all parties in a love recognition dynamic, as discussed above, can also complicate intimate relations. Illustrations can be found in difficulties that often characterise the enforcement of protection orders in domestic violence situations and in dilemmas associated with the removal of abused or neglected children from their families, although both these situations can be perceived as supporting legitimate limitations on domination in the domestic sphere. These examples highlight the ever-present tensions between recognition claims of different types. The various claims arising from the three distinctive spheres of recognition, and the different recognition needs that they signify, must be weighed up and negotiated in each case in modern complex societies.

Finally, Honneth (1995f:177–179) argues that the sphere of esteem recognition also contains significant potential for normative ethical development. As outlined previously, in the modern pluralistic society different social groups compete to have their particular cultural interpretations of society's over-arching ideals prevail in the value horizon through which social esteem is apportioned for an individual subject's achievements and contributions. Amongst this diversity, it is the interpretations of the most powerful groups that dominate while the understandings of minority groups tend to remain largely outside mainstream visibility. An expansion of esteem recognition would see specific groups' unique interpretations of society's goals, that is, their self-realisation traditions, publicly acknowledged and incorporated. Honneth ideally envisages a value horizon whereby all subjects are esteemed for their manner of self-realisation. However, for this to take effect, a society's value horizon must

become increasingly open to including a variety of cultural interpretations while its hierarchical arrangement of goals must progressively submit to horizontal competition (Honneth, 1995f:122). It is this particular aspect of recognition theory that provides significant critical potential for intercultural inquiry. This argument will be expanded in the next section.

Indeed, through historical social upheaval, social esteem has developed normatively in developed societies to increase its scope, universality and context sensitivity. However, core values and the relations of solidarity are problematic for two reasons. Rights recognition can have a restrictive effect on esteem recognition, because the value horizon is limited by modern legal arrangements, which may, in turn, hamper cultural change towards post-traditional solidarity. Legal changes made in the 1990s in Aotearoa New Zealand to include the indigenous Māori educational modes of Kohanga Reo (preschool) and Kura Kaupapa (primary school) in the official education system are a modern illustration of legal recognition 'catching up' with cultural change in the sphere of esteem recognition. Secondly, contemporary cultural interpretations are increasing and differentiating rapidly, resulting in devolvement rather than centralisation of the value horizon that mediates esteem recognition. Honneth (1995f:179) suggests that we accept the resulting inevitable tension, that it is "no longer a matter for theory but rather for the future of social struggles".

Critique of Honneth

Honneth's project has generated animated debate amongst scholars, 'ranging from the fundamental to the interpretive' (Celikates, 2016:319). Indeed, critique of recognition theory specifically, or of the central importance assigned to the concept of recognition more generally, is too numerous to include in this chapter. While acknowledging that much of this literature is broadly relevant, this section will limit itself to a brief look at critical commentary specifically pertinent to the intercultural focus and empirical findings of this book. For an in-depth consideration regarding critical assessments of Honneth's theory, and his political philosophy more broadly, there are plentiful sources on offer (see, e.g., *Critical*

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Horizons, 2015; Deranty, 2009a, 2010a; Lysaker & Jakobsen, 2015b; Mendieta, 2014; Petherbridge, 2011b; Schmidt am Busch & Zurn, 2010; Thompson, 2006; van den Brink & Owen, 2007; Zurn, 2015). Acknowledging that many questions regarding his recognition model remain unresolved, Honneth (2012f:vii) himself has attempted to address some of the critique in his recent publication, *The I in We*.

Scholars, who endorse Honneth overall, have highlighted internal tensions and posed questions ranging from the anthropology of recognition (Heidegren, 2002; Petherbridge, 2013) to the difficulties of practical application (Rosenfield & Saavedra, 2013). McBride (2013:6) notes a ‘recognition-deficit’ mindset emergent in the recognition approach, which he argues fails to do justice to the complexity of recognition relations and struggles for recognition in the everyday world, encourages a “truncated snapshot of relations of recognition” in terms of power, and poses a view of subjects as “passive recipients of recognition”. There is some concern that Honneth ties the three modes of recognition a little too firmly to discrete institutional spheres and also disquiet regarding what some see as Honneth’s lack of attention to the influence of the institutional, structural and material worlds, which always already enclose the subjective and intersubjective dimensions (Deranty, 2007; Renault, 2004). This is a relevant consideration, as the research findings analysed in the empirical section of the book point to existing social structures and forms of institutionalised racism, which impinge negatively on intercultural relations of recognition at work. Moreover, Honneth (2008, 2010) himself argues against some of his earlier notions regarding the location of normative critique in relation to employment. His shifting ideas regarding a normative conception of paid work, significant for the analytical framework of the book, are specifically addressed in Chapter [Four](#).

Deranty (2009a:427/436), and Honneth (2012f:x) himself, note that the psychological as opposed to cultural take on identity, and Honneth’s insistence upon the structural dependence of the subject on the recognition of others, may appear problematic for some critical theorists because it might be seen to weaken the foundation upon which emancipatory claims can be made and depoliticise the process of progressive social change. Indeed, as Lysaker (2017:33) notes, Honneth’s work has been criticised for “reducing political philosophy to moral psychology”. In this

regard, scholars have honed in on the tensions among the psychological, interpersonal and political (McNay, 2015; Seymour, 2010a); the complex relations among subjective formation, intersubjectivity, power and critique (Petherbridge, 2013); the definitional status of injustice (Fraser, 2003a); the minimisation of the state's role in creating oppression (Garret, 2010); and the issue of evaluating misrecognition in terms of its reality as well as its individual psychological impacts (Fraser, 2001, 2003b; McBride & Seglow, 2009). This problem of evaluation is particularly relevant in the current work. The author accepted the research informants' experiences and perceptions of employment-related misrecognition and its negative effects as 'real' to them, even while comprehending the heterogeneous nature of subjective pathologies and responses, and the specificity of concrete work situations and practices. The specific issues related to the assessment of misrecognition as it emerged during this project's fieldwork are discussed in the following chapter.

Other critics maintain that the idea of mutual recognition reproduces the very oppression that it sets out to address because it theorises agency as contingent upon recognition from outside the subject (Düttmann, 2000; Markell, 2003; Oliver, 2001) or it sets up universal recognition as an 'idealised end-state' (Tully, 1999:175). From a feminist standpoint, McNay (2008) claims that recognition theories are not sufficiently rooted in a sociological understanding of power relations and therefore limit analysis of the role of identity and agency in the context of gender inequality. In terms of Honneth's theory specifically, Connolly (2010) argues for its greater engagement with feminist theory to address what she sees as its compromised conception of power in the sphere of love-based recognition. Other scholars target what they see as its 'empirical narrowness and fraught universalism' (Hansen, 2009; Lamont & Mizrachi, 2012), its 'cultural monism' (Calder, 2011; Fraser, 2003b), its commitment to normative presuppositions (Souza, 2016), inherent problems with the notion of individual autonomy (Phillips, 2017), and "a suppressed dichotomy, inherited from Mead, between the immediate pre-recognitive self and the mediated self produced intersubjectively" (Hulatt, 2015:352).

Commentators have also drawn attention to what they consider to be the potentially problematic nature of Honneth's category of esteem,

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maintaining that competition amongst subjects for social esteem might result in misrecognition rather than recognition (Fraser, 2003a; Markell, 2003; Seglow, 2009; Smith, 2012b). For example, in their efforts to maximise profits, corporations might mobilise work-related esteem as a resource for which their employees are expected to compete. This critique has resonance in an intercultural sense, in that the empirical fieldwork informing this book did indeed discover traces of competition for esteem recognition through work. Although not institutionalised in any sense, some of the research participants noted with pride favourable comparisons made by bosses and colleagues between Pacific Islanders considered ‘good workers’, such as themselves and their family members, contrasted with ‘the usual perception of Pacific Islanders as unreliable and work shy’. The tendency to intra-cultural comparison complicates intercultural relations of recognition at work and raises important questions regarding the ‘ideology, power relations and moral ambiguity of esteem recognition’, as Smith (2012b:202–203) has noted.

In the everyday multiculturalism field of study, some scholars appreciate the possibilities Honneth’s theory offers for normative critique (Noble, 2005, 2007, 2009a; Wise, 2009a). Overall, however, recognition theory is considered ‘insufficiently elaborated’ for what Noble (2009a:879) calls an “empirically grounded phenomenology of relations of recognition and subjectification in different milieux”. This is a valid criticism, one that is likely to be increasingly addressed by Honneth-oriented intercultural researchers in the future. A major challenge of this cross-cultural project was the delineation of a viable analytical framework and the elaboration of workable conceptual categories through which to utilise Honneth’s higher order recognition model in the analysis of empirical findings.

The chapter has thus far rendered the two distinct but inter-related premises that constitute Honneth’s theory, as well as providing a brief overview of some of the critique relevant to this project. For more comprehensive accounts of recognition theory, its rich historical background and empirical reasoning, as well as consideration of its wider implications for social and political philosophy and what Honneth (1995f:175) calls ‘post-traditional democratic ethical life’, refer to Honneth (1995e, 1995f, 2007a, 2012f, 2014), Deranty (2009a, 2010a), Lysaker and Jakobsen (2015a) and Petherbridge (2013). We now move the focus to the potential

of this approach for scholarly study, beginning with a discussion of the application of recognition theory in critical sociological inquiry more broadly and progressing to a more detailed focus on the use of Honneth's model in intercultural research.

Recognition Theory and Critical Sociological Inquiry

One of the key purposes in presenting the main elements of Honneth's recognition theory in this chapter has been to highlight its descriptive, explanatory and normative potential for critical sociological inquiry, such as represented by this project. This section of the chapter will now bring these prospects into greater focus. It will also provide a review of the main application literature in various social science fields and situate this book within that developing tradition, specifically the field of critical cross-cultural inquiry.

The Potential of Recognition Theory for Critical Social Research

Honneth has always intended that recognition theory, originating as it does in a philosophical tradition, be established as the basis of a productive social science research programme with implications for social and political action (Deranty, 2012b:39; Honneth, 2012a:vii; Smith, 2012a). Honneth aims to restore social and political philosophy from what he views as 'its indeterminate and residual status in philosophical traditions to a clearly defined field of critical and practical endeavour' (Honneth, 2007c:3–4). As Petersen and Willig (2004:338–339) note, Honneth is 'inviting dual aims for contemporary social philosophy, specifically a sociology that can ground its claims normatively and a moral philosophy that is empirically informed'. Recognition theory defines the formal or anthropological conditions of human autonomy and these conditions turn on institutionalised modes of affirming social recognition. The point, as far as critical sociological inquiry is concerned, is that a subject cannot develop the practical self-relations necessary to become a fully individuated, self-realised and autonomous person *without* recognition

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from fellow human beings. Honneth (2007a:xiii) thus establishes the moral implications of recognition and misrecognition, and in that sense he defends subjects' ethical and just treatment of one another. Moreover, responses to unethical treatment in the form of recognition denial might form the affective motivational basis for a social struggle aimed at expanded recognition.

Honneth provides unique descriptive, explanatory and normative resources for the critical analysis of recognition relations, as demonstrated in the outline of his theory above. Framed in terms of the three spheres of recognition and social struggles aiming to expand the scope and universality of mutual recognition in each sphere, critical social research can concern itself with analysing, in depth, those social processes through which individual recognition and misrecognition are conveyed and experienced in a society. There is plenty of scope for such analyses, given the diversity and complexity of recognition relations in modern societies. Descriptive and explanatory work can centre on subjective and collective experiences of recognition and misrecognition in each of the spheres, while normative direction is provided by Honneth's formal model of ethical life. As has been thoroughly established by now, the experience of misrecognition or disrespect constitutes the internal link between normative expectations of recognition and social pathologies. Indeed, from Honneth's perspective, critique should focus particularly on the pathological. It should aim to analyse abusive, exclusionary and insulting social practices in terms of their impacts on a subject's possibilities of affirming recognition, and thus the development of positive self-relations, self-fulfilment and autonomy.

Furthermore, the Critical School's methodological perspective of transcendence within immanence, introduced earlier, provides a specific edge to such recognition-related social inquiry. It enables the theorist to "turn description into criticism" by measuring reality against its own implicit norms (Deranty, 2012a:157). Unfulfilled expectations of recognition from a specific social group, or around a specific type of social activity, may have been aggregated and articulated in a social movement or public discourse. However, whether this is the case or not, the work of critical social research consists in making immanent norms explicit, thereby revealing the potential for an expansion, and possibly a creation, of norms

already implicit in social reality. This method is opposed to the more common approach of applying to concrete social reality, a set of principles devised from an external perspective independent of that social reality, devised as it were 'from the outside', as in the Kantian and utopian traditions.

Recognition Theory Applied in the Social Sciences

As noted above, Honneth anticipates that the recognition model become a theoretical grounding for critical social research and political practice. In the early 2000s, Nordic academics Petersen and Willig (2004:338) observed that, despite increasing international attention, Honneth's approach was yet to have its 'breakthrough into mainstream sociology'. Since then, however, social science scholars from various traditions have increasingly engaged in practical applications of recognition theory, with the relatively recent *Recognition Theory as Social Research* (O'Neill & Smith, 2012) specifically focusing on a social science research programme. Moreover, in the process of applying the recognition schema, some researchers have teased out useful mid-level concepts or suggested modifications and innovations to bridge social practice and Honneth's theory, which is indeed pitched at a high level of abstraction so as to define the normative structural conditions of human self-realisation. Many of these applications highlight the descriptive, explanatory and normative strength of the recognition model. However, there is also a tendency in some of the application literature to pick and choose between certain aspects of the theory, or include Honneth as part of a 'recognition bevy', without fully appreciating the unique intentions and unified solidity of his critical recognition schema.

One important area of application is social work, where there seems to be a developing hub regarding recognition theory (Houston, 2009, 2010, 2016; Houston & Dolan, 2008; Juul, 2009; Marthinsen & Skjefstad, 2011). In particular, Houston and Dolan (2008:466) commend Honneth's recognition concept for providing the foundations of an ethical reflective model in the social work profession. In an example of the way in which researchers are devising ways of bridging theory and practice, they add an extra layer to his framework, composed of types of social

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support, to create a model whereby a social worker's everyday dealings with a family can be viewed as an episode of recognition or misrecognition. Social work practitioners then understand their mission in terms of increasing the levels of self-realisation, and thus the empowerment, of society's most vulnerable members. Through the link between recognition and social justice, social workers are thus provided with a moral philosophical foundation, which these academics maintain has been missing from their profession. There are also other areas of application in social work, including research with children in care (Hooper & Gunn, 2014; Warming, 2015) and youth participation (Thomas, 2012). Of particular note here, Thomas promotes the relevance of Honneth's recognition categories in developing a theoretical framework for analysing the ways in which children and young people become members of participatory social groups. There is also growing interest in the use of Honneth's theory in the associated disability field. For example, Reeve (2012) promotes his account of recognition to address the development of what she names 'psycho-emotional disablism' in professional relationships between social work students and disability service users. Reeves understands disablism in terms of the interpersonal and structural restrictions that negatively affect the participation and well-being of people who live with impairment. Also utilising a recognition framework in this area, Calder (2011) and Pereira (2013) propose that this type of disablism is best understood as misrecognition, although their theorising and empirical applications extend beyond Honneth.

Education is a further area of developing application, although it needs to be acknowledged that some of this literature fails to appreciate the comprehensiveness of Honneth's approach, as well as the significant theoretical differences among him, Taylor and Fraser. A range of researchers emphasise the utility of recognition concepts for comprehending the complexity of identity development in schools (Jenlink & Townes, 2009), addressing student well-being (Graham, Powell, & Truscott, 2016; Thomas, Graham, Powell, & Fitzgerald, 2016), promoting productive early childhood learning environments (Jensen, 2012), recognising prior learning (Hamer, 2013), in terms of the right to education as a tool of empowerment (Goncalves & Del Dujo, 2016) and for developing more effective pedagogic practices in a range of educational environments

(Bingham, 2001; Brown & Murphy, 2012; Heikkinen, 2003; Heikkinen & Huttunen, 2002; Huttunen & Heikkinen, 2004; Huttunen & Murphy, 2012; Murphy & Brown, 2012; Sandberg, 2016; West, 2014; West, Fleming, & Finnegan, 2013).

There are a number of substantial applications in the field of health-care. A recognition framing has been utilised in a case study of leprosy sufferers (Mendonca, 2011) and to understand professional-patient interaction during aggressive incidents in emergency care contexts (Morken, Alsaker, & Johansen, 2016). Ahlmark, Whyte, Harting, and Tjørnhøj-Thomsen (2016) employ Honneth's rights-based and solidarity-based recognition concepts to analyse the experience of Arabic-speaking immigrants in a diabetes training programme. Interestingly, their findings underline the significance of 'silent processes of care and recognition' in influencing the broader well-being of participants. Specifically regarding mental health, Heidegren (2004:371, citing Petersen & Willig, 2001) suggests that Honneth's theory of recognition is a potential resource for analysing depression and indicating remedies beyond drug prescription. Petersen and Willig (2004) have also used the recognition model to analyse the destabilisation of individual and collective identity formation brought about by the logic of modern work practices, claiming to provide 'sociological substance' for their research by juxtaposing Honneth's theory with analyses of contemporary theorists of work.

Within a wider constellation, dimensions of Honneth's recognition model are being employed to focus on the meaning of (dis)respect amongst people claiming alternative sexual identities (Bernd, Grabow, & Böhme, 2015; Carlson & Linville, 2016), as well as in the areas of care work (Gregoratto, 2016), citizen activism (Gransow, 2014), criminology (Barry, 2016; Yar, 2011), human rights (Clarke, 2012; Horn, 2016), refugee displacement (Brun, 2016), sport (Andersen & Loland, 2017), theology (Saarinen, 2013) and unpaid work (Nierling, 2012). Furthermore, there is a growing hub of scholarly interest focused on the specificity of the underlying dynamics regarding recognition and misrecognition. This research covers a wide range of social contexts across Honneth's three recognition spheres, and is particularly rich and nuanced (see, e.g., Martineau et al., 2012 and Thompson & Yar, 2011b). On a more theoretical level, Thijssen (2016) draws on Honneth in the development of a

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new conceptual framework for research into intergenerational solidarity, and Klikauer (2016) proposes a four-part delineation in the concept of 'negative recognition' (misrecognition, non-recognition, de-recognition, pathological mass-recognition) in the realms of paid work and politics.

Some of the (mis)recognition impetus has focused on multiculturalism or intercultural studies, specifically in the field of ethno-religious diversity (Meer, Martineau, & Thompson, 2012b), although most of this literature draws beyond Honneth's particular framework. Two exceptions are Thompson (2012), who employs Honneth's three spheres in addressing the harms of misrecognition and arguing for the suppression of free speech when it involves ethno-religious hatred, and Cox (2010, 2012), who claims that an interpretation of immigration policies and practices through a Honnethian lens clarifies their social function and normative significance. There does exist a scattering of other multiculturalism projects, which draw on aspects of Honneth (Sainsbury, 2003; Valiente, 2003; Williams, 2003), including some within the tradition of everyday multiculturalism (Noble, 2005, 2007, 2009a; Wise, 2009a). However, as indicated earlier, while Honneth's descriptive, explanatory and normative aims are appreciated, the theory is generally considered insufficiently elaborated for cross-cultural research into 'situated daily life' (Noble, 2009a:879).

This section of the chapter has endorsed the descriptive, explanatory and normative potential of recognition theory for productive sociological inquiry and identified some of the current application activity. Most importantly, it has demonstrated significant growth in the use of Honneth's recognition concepts in a diverse range of social science fields, highlighting, in line with the theorist's intent, the possibilities of alignment between philosophical theory and sociological inquiry. Although beyond the scope of this book, a detailed critical evaluation of these different uses to which recognition theory has been put, the various levels at which the applications are pitched and the conceptual devices used to bridge theory and practice, would help to further establish the credibility of Honneth's approach for social science research, as well as to protect the integrity of his model. The discussion above has also shown that, within the constellation of application literature, multiculturalism projects are thin on the ground. As noted in Chapter [One](#), this book specifically

addresses the deficit by utilising recognition theory in an intercultural study, specifically one that focuses on cross-cultural relations of recognition at work. The following section will therefore focus in greater detail on the critical potential of Honneth's schema for intercultural research.

Recognition Theory and Multiculturalism

While a focus on relations of recognition in all three of Honneth's recognition spheres holds critical potential, it is those in the third realm of esteem recognition that are of particular potency for intercultural research. As introduced previously, Honneth provides a unique take on identity and culture, as well as a means of theorising the impacts of (dis) respect by linking social esteem recognition, mediated through a contested value horizon, with the possibilities of a self-fulfilled autonomous life. It is these specific theoretical resources that designate his theory relevant and potentially fruitful for critical cross-cultural investigation. Let us look a little more closely, then, at these core conceptual elements in Honneth's model and the ways in which they bypass some of the conundrums of classical multiculturalism.

The Concept of the Contested Value Horizon

The contested value horizon is a central concept in the third sphere of esteem recognition. Honneth (1995f:122–127) acknowledges that a tension exists in the modern organisation of social esteem, which renders it subject to permanent cultural conflict. To explicate this, he proposes that societal integration is achieved through an orientation to shared goals on two conceptual levels. The first conceptual level consists of a society's core foundational norms. Honneth does not provide specific examples, because he understands such fundamental guiding principles as historically and culturally contingent. However, some examples in modern liberal democracies such as Australia would include liberty, equality, democracy, the rule of law and the sanctity of life. These over-arching societal goals are abstract ideals, and offer little in the way of specific guidelines when faced with the problems of practical interpretation in concrete social contexts.

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Honneth therefore proposes a second conceptual level, named a society's value horizon, whereby first-level principles are interpreted and given practical validity. The value horizon is a crucial element in the third realm of esteem recognition, because it underlies the criteria through which the social valuing of subjective traits, abilities and contributions, in other words the various modes of individual self-realisation in the society, are mediated and social integration potentially achieved. But the practical expression of a pluralistic society's abstract ideals can involve a range of distinctive cultural interpretations made by different social groups. Such groups or communities of interest, whether formed along class, race, ethnic, cultural, gender, sexual orientation or other lines, are understood as characterised by a relatively identifiable set of values to which their members subscribe in varying degrees of solidarity. The varying interpretations of the larger societal norms thus constitute a shared or communal value horizon of normative models and symbolic resources characteristic of the different communities of interest. It is important to note that the term 'shared' does not imply a fixed or homogeneous integration of cultural understandings within a social group. Rather, a communal value horizon constitutes a dynamic, 'symbolically articulated, open and porous framework of orientation', which 'seeps into' individual value convictions, everyday cultural repertoires and collective lifestyles (Deranty, 2009a:300–307).

From this perspective, a society's value horizon is in a state of more or less permanent contestation. Honneth views the contested value horizon as an enduring transactional process amongst the different communities of interest, as they compete for influence regarding the ways in which the society's fundamental principles will be given concrete expression. In this regard, power, and thus access and influence, are unequally distributed, with some social groups' cultural interpretations achieving ascendancy while other cultural filters recede, remain largely invisible or are actively devalued. The members of these more marginalised collectives may be obliged to adopt various responses, for example, reconciliation, accommodation, resignation, resistance or a mix of several stances, in order to situate themselves within the social order (Deranty, 2009a:305). This is likely to involve complex negotiation between the group's own filtering of the polity's abstract ideals and the dominant versions. At this level, soci-

etal integration is only achieved through more or less partial recognition denial, and therefore structurally entails the possibility of ensuing struggles for recognition on the part of less privileged social groups. Hence integration in the 'everyday running of real societies' rests on clashes between different cultural interpretations of the same core goals and therefore on the in-eliminable potentiality of social conflict. This important aspect of Honneth's theory, as it relates to multiculturalism research, will be expanded in a following section.

Two illustrations regarding the contested value horizon are offered here. Both are relevant in terms of the overall direction of the book, in that they highlight significant differences between majority and minority cultural interpretations of over-arching norms. This first is located in the cross-cultural issue of land rights in Australia. The indigenous and mainstream communities of Australia can be said to share the ideal of land ownership, but cultural interpretations regarding land possession differ significantly. For many Australians, the land on which they live is something over which ownership rights can be asserted and from which profit might be accumulated. However, the traditional Aboriginal perspective turns this idea of ownership on its head. Land is understood as a sacred ancestral home and spiritual resource, to which the indigenous people of a particular area are tied and for which they carry shared guardianship and other responsibilities (Yunupingu, 2016). In the words of an Aboriginal elder interviewed on National Radio (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 11 March 2017), "We belong to the land. The land does not belong to us." The First Nation's struggle to reassert interpretative control over traditional lands is ongoing In Australia, where the cultural aspect of the struggle is intrinsically related to its other legal and justice aspects (Povinelli, 2002).

The second illustration, aspects of which are echoed in later chapters of this book, highlights different ways of putting into practice the principle of democratic decision-making. From the modern Western perspective, democratic decision-making does involve public discussion and debate, but ultimately important national issues are decided through majority vote in the parliament. In contrast, the traditional Samoan decision-making mode of 'faatasi', popularised in the West as 'the Pacific way' during the 1970s, is based on a consensual process, although it originally

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excluded women. A group might debate a contentious matter through days and weeks if necessary, until all the participants come to an agreement. This communal process is valued because it ideally aims to locate a solution that meets all political aspirations, and thus avoids the phenomenon of 'winners and losers' and its potential for future conflict. Thus the agreement may not necessarily be unanimous in the Western sense. However, the crucial aspect is that all participants have shared in the decision-making process, and they ideally understand themselves as 'belonging to that decision'. The agreement is then sealed with the drinking of kava to bind together the people who held opposing ideas during the discussions (Campbell, 1990:197; Henningham, 1995:6; Tcherkezoff, 1998:428–431).

These two illustrations point to significant diversity in the practical interpretation of the social ideals of land ownership and democratic decision-making. Without wishing to overstate the case, the differences emerge perhaps from divergent, albeit contested, psychosocial understandings of self-identity (Kusserow, 1999:541; Thomas, 1991:8/205). In the second illustration, whereas Western interpretations of the self may be conceived of as more individualistic, traditional Pacific Island cultures are based on a more collectivist understanding whereby the self tends to be regarded as indistinguishable from the social group. The point illustrates the way in which different ethno-cultural groups approach the interpretation of societal norms from different psychological and social perspectives at times, and these should be taken into account in critical scholarship. As discussed earlier, Honneth (1995f:122) argues for the increasing openness of a society's value horizon to sanctioning a diverse range of cultural interpretations of fundamental ideals, and for the progressive rearrangement of social goals towards more horizontal competition.

This discussion brings us to the significance of the subject's immersion in collective life with regard to the possibilities of self-realisation and autonomy. This is another aspect of the concept of the contested value horizon, which is of particular relevance for critical intercultural study. As is clear by now, the ultimate point of recognition is the emergence of positive self-relations, self-realisation and thus 'effective human agency'

(Smith, 2012b:201). Relations-to-self, including self-esteem in the sphere of esteem recognition, derive to a large extent from an individual's immersion in a social group, since it is from this immersion that s/he will draw the symbolic resources to meaningfully interpret society's core normative framework, to orient the self in social life so to speak. The embedded-ness of the individual in particular groups within the general social order means that the development of selfhood is dependent upon the way in which a collective way of life is itself integrated within the overall social and cultural order.

With regard to such integration, the different ways of life in a society can be understood as aligned on a fluid continuum, from admiration to denigration, in the more or less implicit inherited hierarchy of value positions on the general value horizon. Disrespect shown to certain collective traditions, their cultural expressions and patterns of self-realisation, potentially erodes that group's possibilities of attributing social value to its unique belief systems and interpretations of core ideals, fluid as these may be within the collective. Indeed, social denigration can result in the group involved relating to itself as an inferior and negative influence in the society. Moreover, the experience of cultural devaluation may bring with it a loss of personal esteem for members of the collective. According to Honneth (1995f:134), the deficiency of recognition 'robs the subjects in question' of opportunities to relate to their way of life as something of positive social significance, which may in turn erode the possibilities of attributing value to individual abilities and contributions which they have developed within that cultural tradition.

The Contested Value Horizon and Intercultural Research

The critical potential located in the notion of the contested value horizon, within Honneth's sphere of esteem recognition, holds particular salience for research in the multicultural realm. Initially, in theorising a struggle over the interpretation of core societal norms, Honneth had in mind groups relegated along class and gender lines (Deranty, 2009a:304). However, the concept also brings a fresh approach to multicultural

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research focused on the marginalisation of groups defined by their racial, ethnic and cultural distinctiveness. In this regard, the contrast between Honneth's approach, and that traditionally promoted by classical multiculturalism, was introduced briefly in Chapter [One](#). This discussion is expanded below, given that the important differences in perspective underlie the analytical approach of this book.

Classical multiculturalism focuses on the tensions and complexities associated with the political inclusion and social integration of distinctive ethno-cultural groups in an increasingly migrant-oriented and culturally diverse global context. The discourse developed as part of a wider politics of identity during post-war transformation in Western societies (Deranty, 2009a:307; Mishra, 2012; Robinson, 2007). The "social democratic consensus" based on concepts of "class, equality, economy and nation" is understood to have been gradually sidelined from the 1960s onwards by a politics centred on notions of "identity, difference, culture and ethnicity" (Thompson, 2006:1–3). In this changed environment, respect, inclusion and dignity or the avoidance of disrespect, exclusion and humiliation, took on as much normative importance as the elimination of inequality, as it had been narrowly understood in terms of the distribution of social goods (Honneth, 2004:351). Within this new focus, multiculturalism was founded on social and political claims for the recognition of diverse racial, ethnic and cultural identities.

As briefly covered in Chapter [One](#), such a founding has always been problematic, leading to the waning of multicultural impetus in the West. Critical multicultural issues are usually framed in terms of values clashes and negotiations, group rights, the elimination of discrimination, diversity management, cultural maintenance and multicultural citizenship amongst others (Castles, Cope, Kalantzis, & Morrissey, 1992; Kymlicka, 2007; May, Modood, & Squires, 2004; Modood, 2007; Murphy, 2012; Parekh, 2006). But conceptual and practical problems arise because distinctive ethno-cultural groups then tend to be conceived of as static homogenous entities and their members characterised as possessing an inherent 'essential' identity (Werbner, 1997:6; Yuval-Davis, 2010:266). Multicultural policies can then inadvertently result in idealistically imbued practices, apparent lack of concern for wider social cohesion (Murphy, 2012:2–9/112), an acceptance of 'immigrant ghettoization'

and the living of 'parallel lives' (Phillips, 2006; Phillips & Saharso, 2008:291; Seymour, 2010a:223), with 'an accommodating blind eye' turned to a group's internal power structures, inequality and illiberal practices (McBride, 2009:96; Meer et al., 2012a:133; Mishra, 2012:100).

On a broader level, the cultural relativism and idealism inherent in classical multiculturalism's notions of group representation has the potential to destabilise the integration of Western liberal democracies founded on ideals of universal justice, equality of opportunity and free speech. Debates have intensified between a liberal defence of equal treatment and an identity politics leading to the defence of special treatment, with some theorists proposing forms of integration (Barry, 2001; Cattle, 2008; Carens, 2000; Eisenberg, 2002; Modood, 2005; Modood, Hansen, Bleich, O'Leary, & Carens, 2006; Parekh, 2006; Reitz, 2009a:7; Robinson, 2007; Schlesinger, 1998; Seymour, 2012; Taylor, 1995). Some radical scholars, meanwhile, support the accommodation of differential treatment, arguing strongly that discourse must pay attention to underlying social norms, which structure unequal power relations and thus access and opportunity for disadvantaged groups (Fraser, 1997; Kelly, 2002a:11–12; Young, 1990).

Honneth's theory offers a means of addressing the current sense of stalemate in the discourse of mainstream multiculturalism. In this regard, the two positions are best understood in terms of their different takes on identity and culture. As sketched out earlier in this chapter, Honneth's conception of identity is a uniquely psychological and existential one involving the inalienable necessity of intersubjective recognition for the development of subjective identity, self-fulfilment and autonomy. For him, identity designates the sense of self that is developed by subjects in their social dependency. Honneth therefore bypasses the multiculturalist problem of essentialism, the perspective whereby the members of distinctive groups are initially understood as possessing an ethno-cultural identity and as engaging in social transactions on the basis of that pre-existing identity, even if that identity is adapted and modified over time through interaction in the dynamic everyday world (Deranty, 2009a:303–304; Lahire, 2011:xviii).

The recognition model also circumvents the idea of the distinctive ethno-cultural group as a fixed homogeneous entity, and the associated

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issue regarding reconciliation between that distinctive cultural group and society, which has arisen in multiculturalist discourse (Parekh, 2006:343–344). Honneth's schema positions culture as the way in which specific social groups interpret the over-arching societal norms shared by all groups. Culture therefore describes the specific content of collective understandings and moral claims, which the different groups and classes bring to the contestation of the value horizon. Hence, Honneth does not avoid the idea of a clash of cultural values, but his point is that this clash takes place from within the contestation of the value horizon, which mediates the social valuing or esteem recognition of achievement and contribution. From this perspective, multiculturalist ideals regarding reconciliation between distinctive cultures and society are inadequate, indeed irrelevant, because different social groups perpetually dispute the society's normative and symbolic order. The social world is, therefore, 'permanently fragmented' (Honneth, 1995e). Whereas liberal theories of justice may propose minimalist values to avoid controversy regarding different conceptions of 'the good' in modern value plural societies (see, e.g., Ceva & Calder, 2009:843), Honneth understands conflicts over values as inevitable and, through the action of progressive social movements, as potentially productive in social and moral terms.

Thus recognition theory offers a vital conceptual resource for intercultural critique, which is not available under the classical multiculturalism model. As outlined above, under Honneth, critical concern is not focused on the recognition and inclusion of minority cultural groups and their identities as such. Rather, the focus is on the submersion of marginalised groups in the social order and the potentially unjust and damaging consequences for group members in terms of their capacity for self-fulfilment and autonomy. To reiterate, a disputed value horizon is an enduring fixture where certain cultural interpretations of core norms dominate the symbolic order in each historical case, while others remain subdued. Critical cross-cultural scholarship can thus focus on the marginalisation of a particular group's interpretations and the consequences of that marginalisation for the sense of social merit developed by the collective's members, their cultural and psychological opportunities for self-realisation, and the group's sense of social solidarity. In other words, critique can analyse the ways in which cultural denigration impacts on

subjective identity, self-relations and the possibilities of flourishing, while also exploring the links among the experience of injustice, the diagnosis of social pathologies and the possibilities of progressive social change. Indeed, this social movements aspect of Honneth's argument is also important. Critical attention can turn to forms of resistance and struggle, which might emerge from within minority collectives not just in terms of their interests and rights but also in terms of their contestation of the prevailing value traditions in the society. In this regard, common discursive resources are required to connect subjective experiences and thus enable individuals to view their social relegation as socially caused, not just emerging from what they might view as their own individual or cultural inadequacy.

Furthermore, according to Honneth (2003:161–163), the common way of conceptualising claims for recognition by minority collectives in multicultural debates is problematic because it seems to imply the existence of a separate fourth sphere of recognition. A scholarly forum has developed in this regard, concerned with the conundrums involved in the recognition of collective identities under conditions of 'deliberative democracy' (Connolly, 2015; Heins, 2012:87–89; Hirvonen, 2016; Honneth, 2014; McBride, 2005; McBride & Seglow, 2009; Seymour, 2010a:219). A fourth order of recognition would involve individuals' normative claims not already included in their demands to be integrated in society from the point of view of their equal moral standing (second recognition sphere) or their unique set of traits and contributions to society (third recognition sphere). Indeed, it implies the claiming of social respect and social esteem simply on the grounds of membership of a group or subculture, which signals a return to 'pre-modern notions of estate-based honour' (Anderson, 1995:xviii). However, while Honneth does not deny the concept of culture, he denies that cultural identity needs to be claimed *for itself*. Culture can form the basis of claims for group rights, but the cultural aspects of normative demands do not require a specific vocabulary apart from that of equal rights and due esteem. Indeed, as McBride and Seglow (2009:8) argue, from the point of view of demands to be integrated in the social order on one's own terms, identity struggles are "actually struggles for equal rights and equal status as members of the moral community". These demands, for exam-

ple, claims for the elimination of group-specific discrimination, protection from the encroachment of cultural identity and the maintenance of unique ways of life, are best justified through the principle of equality under the law, where subjects can be viewed as having both an individual and an institutional identity (Deranty, 2009a:307; Seymour, 2010a:219). Thus in the politics of multiculturalism, demands for the recognition of unique ethno-cultural communities are best debated in the legal arena as extensions of universal rights or the instigation of special group-specific rights, and in the third sphere of civic esteem or social solidarity.

Conclusion

This book utilises Honneth's recognition model in a critical intercultural study, specifically in the domain of paid work. Beginning with a brief look into the overall theme of recognition, Chapter [Two](#) has presented the central features of Honneth's theory including critique relevant to this project. In conclusion, we can say that from its members' perspectives, a society's institutions are legitimate to the extent that they guarantee patterns of mutual intersubjective recognition in the intimate, legal and cultural spheres of human society. This is because, and this is the crucial principle underlying Honneth's model, productive self-relations, and therefore the possibilities for individuals to develop positive identity, self-realisation and autonomy, are dependent upon such recognition. With justice thus entailing that social and political orders secure relations of recognition such that all subjects are able to access adequate forms of recognition, injustice equates with the failure of recognition and therefore the ethical basis of self-determination. Disappointed claims for recognition may engender the experience of disrespect and injustice, from which progressive social movements may emerge aiming to redress and expand forms of recognition in terms of substantive scope and universality. Via this negative route, argues Honneth, progressive social movements, as struggles for recognition, can be regarded as structuring forces in society's moral development.

It has been argued that Honneth's philosophical thesis provides descriptive, explanatory and normative resources for critical sociological investigation, framed in terms of relations of recognition in the spheres of love,

rights and esteem. Descriptive and explanatory direction centres on individual and collective experiences of recognition and misrecognition, while normative force is provided by Honneth's formal conception of ethical life. The chapter has offered a brief excursion into some of the social sciences literature utilising the recognition model and, in so doing, has situated this book as an application of Honneth's theory in an intercultural context. In this regard, the key theoretical construct of the contested value horizon, in the sphere of esteem recognition, constitutes a potent means of analysing recognition relations in cross-cultural contexts. Part Two of the book will utilise these theoretical resources to explore the ways in which submersion in the dominant value horizon shapes everyday (mis)recognition experienced by workers from a minority ethno-cultural tradition. Before this though, Chapter [Three](#) to follow will draw significant compatibilities between recognition theory and everyday multiculturalism, the approach utilised in the research, and present the research methodology, while Chapter [Four](#) will bring together the key themes of the book to establish a framework via which the research's empirical findings can be critically analysed in Part Two.

Chapter Three

Everyday Multiculturalism, Recognition Theory and the Research Methodology

The empirical findings concerning cross-cultural experience in the workplace, on which this book reports, were sourced using an everyday multiculturalism research approach. The previous two chapters have included discussions regarding the means by which recognition theory presents a more sophisticated approach to some of the shortcomings of classical multiculturalism. This chapter will focus on the fit between everyday multiculturalism, which itself developed in response to some of the perspectives typically assumed in mainstream multiculturalism, and Honneth's model. Chapter [Three](#) thus begins with a brief introduction to everyday multiculturalism, and follows that with a longer section regarding the significant commonalities of perspective between it and recognition theory. The third section of the chapter provides a discussion of the book's methodological grounding in these compatibilities, including the specifics of the ethnographic research methods and important questions related to epistemology, ontology and representation.

Everyday Multiculturalism

Everyday multiculturalism, constituting a commonality of approach rather than a unified discipline, is a small but expanding field of multidisciplinary research situated across anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, human geography and social psychology. It draws from a particular sociological tradition, that is, the gaining of insights into social phenomena through a focus on everyday life. The foundations of this approach lie in Max Weber's (1864–1920) emphasis on social agency or action and Chicago School symbolic interactionism, especially the influential work of Goffman (1959, 1963a, 1972) and Garfinkel (1967), which was developed from Mead's insights into self-conscious being-ness as it emerges through symbols and language (Giddens, 2006:17–26/130; Mead, 1934). Everyday multiculturalism takes this micro level approach more specifically into the field of intercultural relations (Wise & Velayutham, 2009a:3). The researcher's lens is thus focused on the complexities and nuances of intersubjective encounters as they are shaped by perceived racial, ethnic and cultural difference.

In Australia and beyond, the everyday multiculturalism approach developed from and remains united by its critique of official multiculturalism. Proponents argue that the classical multicultural approach is top-down and variously idealist, elitist or hegemonic, indeed understood by some to be directed towards the support of neo-liberal political agendas and the ideological containment of cultural diversity (Hage, 1998:231–247; O'Connor, 2010:526–528; Semi et al., 2009:66; Stratton, 1998:206; Wacquant, 2005b:20; Wise, 2009a:42). This top-down academic and policy bias has resulted in an over-focus on the theoretical aspects of 'respectful intercultural co-existence', with the 'real multiculturalism bubbling along' regardless of official discourse or public debate (Ang et al., 2002:4; Hage, 1998:233–235; Wise & Velayutham, 2009a:2). In other words, the overlooking of grounded intercultural engagement has occasioned disparities between official versions of multiculturalism and the challenges presented by the 'lived experience of place-sharing' in ethnically and culturally diverse communities (Wise, 2010:935). However, it is important to note that the intention of most scholars working in the everyday multiculturalism field is to improve, not

renounce, multiculturalism as a model of social incorporation, national identity and service provision. Multiculturalism, it is argued, is better served by a more nuanced, grounded and empirically informed view of intercultural relations, underpinned by a theoretical paradigm that is able to conceive of change, adaptation and convergence (Wise, 2013).

Everyday multiculturalism is thus oriented towards the empirical recognition of ethno-cultural diversity below the radar of policy discourse and abstract multicultural ideals. It underlines a phenomenological orientation, the relational nature of social phenomena and the inevitability of social connectedness and negotiation (Game & Metcalfe, 2011:347; Young, 2004:176). Researchers aim to investigate the dynamics of difference in routine intercultural encounters, the ways in which embodied identities and social relations are 'assembled and reassembled' often moment to moment in such encounters, because it is in such quotidian practices that a plethora of meaningful phenomena can be revealed (Nederveen Pieterse, 2007:98–99). This is not to discount the influence of social structures within which embodied engagement takes place. Everyday multiculturalism seeks to analyse the complex ways in which larger ideological narratives and institutional arrangements shape the micro politics of everyday life and, conversely, the ways in which the everyday influences larger societal structures and macro discourses (Noble & Poynting, 2010; Wassmann, 1998:10; Wise & Velayutham, 2009a:3/15). In revealing insights into cross-cultural encounter in 'the untidy life-world' (Hall, 2012:95), everyday multiculturalism potentially provides a more realistic context for policy initiative, planning and community projects. As Wise and Velayutham (2009a:14–15) note, empirical studies are revealing complexities, ambiguities, tensions and power undercurrents hitherto unremarked in the discourses of mainstream multiculturalism, as well as highlighting existing spaces and practices of progressive intercultural exchange. For a sample of the everyday approach's diverse scholarship across several disciplinary fields, not included elsewhere in this chapter, see Abbas (2000), Amin (2008), Ang (2002), Brown (2012), Nava (2002), Skrbis and Woodward (2007), Watson (2006), Werbner (2006), Wilson (2013) and Wise (2011).

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The workplace, the domain in which this book is situated, is a site of obligatory cross-cultural contact and there is a small literature that focuses a specific lens on the everyday dynamics of transcultural employment. For example, Essed's empirical investigations have included work-related racism (Essed, 2002, 2005), and in her seminal study, she explores the experiences of Black women as they go about their routine work tasks to establish a link between cumulative everyday racism and the structural and ideological reproduction of race-based marginalisation (Essed, 1991). In similar vein, Lamont (2000) investigates the construction of everyday racial boundaries and the moral perspectives of workers, while Lamont and Aksartova (2002), noting that the sphere of paid employment is somewhat overlooked in the cosmopolitan and everyday literature, investigate the cultural scripts that Black and White workers in America and France employ to define forms of solidarity and to bridge racial difference. The empirical chapters in Part Two of the book will draw on this and other related literature (Amin, 2002; Lamont, 1999a; Newman & Ellis, 1999; Sandercock, 2003; Wise, 2009a) to analyse the complex dynamics of intercultural (mis)recognition at work.

Everyday multiculturalism's conception of the lived cross-cultural encounter, understood in terms of subjective perception and embodied experience within society's larger economic and cultural framework, constitutes two significant commonalities with Honneth's approach. The following section will bring a focus to this shared interest in a phenomenological orientation and micro-macro analytical links, along with two further perspectival parallels between the everyday approach and recognition theory. In doing so, it will also provide some further flesh to what are only the bare bones of the everyday multiculturalism perspective sketched in this section.

Everyday Multiculturalism and Recognition Theory: Commonalities of Perspective

This section of the chapter is devoted to identifying the significant perspectival parallels between recognition theory and everyday multiculturalism. These important compatibilities have been touched on in the previous two chapters of Part One, and this is a suitable place in the book to provide further elaboration. Everyday multiculturalism, as a critical

bottom-up response to the top-down bias of classical multiculturalism, is a highly suitable approach for the application of recognition theory in cross-cultural study. The fit is based on the fact that Honneth's philosophical approach is reconstructive, in that he draws on a range of empirically sourced material in developing his critical theory and thus attempts to address the tensions between 'what ought to be and what actually is' in the life-world. Indeed, in order to fully appreciate the nature and scope of recognition theory, it is best understood in the light of Honneth's rejection of the customary disconnect between theory and practice (Honneth, 2012c:119), that is, between philosophy's normative theorising and sociology's empirical investigations into social reality (Celikates, 2016:319). As noted in Chapter [Two](#), his intention is 'a moral philosophy that is empirically informed and a sociology that can ground its claims normatively' (Petersen & Willig, 2004:338–339), thus an aim that encompasses the applicability of recognition theory in the social sciences and in political practice. This section will establish four points of commonality between the social philosophy that underlies Honneth's reconstructive recognition project and the sociological groundings of everyday multiculturalism, namely, an orientation towards phenomenological research, the importance of micro-macro analytical links, a critique of cultural essentialism and a critical emancipatory agenda.

Phenomenologically Oriented Research

The importance of the phenomenological aspects of (inter)cultural action and interaction is one point of commonality between the everyday multiculturalism approach and Honneth's perspective. This interest can be understood within the larger context of 'the cultural turn' in the social sciences, which has seen a significant shift towards a consideration of subjective and social experience and meanings not abstracted into traditional analyses of political and economic systems of which they are a part (Luckmann, 1978:7; Young, 2001:8). Two theorists are of particular intellectual significance regarding the phenomenological leanings of everyday multiculturalism and recognition theory, French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908–1961) and French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002).

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Merleau-Ponty's perspective was influenced by the phenomenological approach of German philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859–1938), who introduced the concept of 'the life-world' to the social sciences (Carr, 1970; Husserl, 1970; Merleau-Ponty, 2012:xx–xxxv). Theorists of the phenomenology school critiqued positivist philosophical and scientific methods of abstraction as second-level (after the fact) phenomena that 'shed little light on the vexed question of human subjectivity'. In particular, Merleau-Ponty (2012) proposed an alternative to the Cartesian separation of mind and body by emphasising the inseparability of body and consciousness. His interest lay in the embodied nature of the socialised subject, particularly focusing on the foundational role that perception plays in an individual's meaningful engagement with the world (Crossley, 1995:44–45; Honneth, 1995b:151–153). To focus phenomenologically is to focus on holistic lived experience, lived from within by the intelligent attentive human being who is 'entirely a part of the world that he or she experiences', a stance that makes transcendence a capacity of the physiological body itself (Abram, 1988:103). Human meaning then is derived "not from fixed and intrinsic attributes but from how it is perceived and acted upon by an embodied consciousness" (Cavallaro, 2001:99).

Bourdieu, one of the first sociologists to emphasise the significance of the everyday world, also favoured phenomenological description so as to provide more nuanced insights into social conditions. Bourdieu drew selectively on Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, amongst others, to fashion an approach to sociology that unifies subject, body and social life-world and thus 'dissolve the dualism of structure and agency' that has tended to dominate social theory (Wacquant, 2005a:6). The concept of habitus, as 'social life incorporated and thus individuated', was Bourdieu's means of transcending the opposition between the individual and society (Bourdieu, 1990b:52–65). For Bourdieu, human beings act neither mechanically nor freely because, "Against both of these theories, it has to be posited that social agents are endowed with habitus, inscribed in their bodies by past experience" (Bourdieu, 2000:138). Thus, like Merleau-Ponty, Bourdieu theorises the human body as the source of subjective meaning and agency, "a repository of a generative, creative capacity to understand" (Wacquant, 1992:20).

A phenomenological orientation, informed at least partly by Merleau-Ponty and Bourdieu, is influential in much everyday multiculturalism scholarship. As discussed above, the phenomenology of intercultural encounter is a crucial aspect of everyday multiculturalism research, whereby subjective perceptions and intersubjective dynamics are revealed, interpreted and linked to broader social and political structures. At the micro level, interpretations emphasise the cognitive, the perceptual, the corporeal, the emotional, the sense related nuances and codes of cross-cultural encounter (Amin, 2002; Bloch & Dreher, 2009; Butcher, 2010; Colombo, 2010; Hage, 1997, 2003; Noble, 2009c; Noble et al., 1999; Rathzel, 2010; Swanton, 2010; Wise, 2009b; Wise & Chapman, 2005). In this tradition, many of Bourdieu's concepts such as social, cultural and symbolic capital, social field, embodiment and habitus, remain salient (Noble, 2007, 2009a, 2013b; Wacquant, 1995; Wise, 2010).

In proposing three types of recognition, love, rights and esteem, as the preconditions for autonomous agency, and injustice therefore as a violation of social expectations regarding such recognition, Honneth (1995f) also orientates towards a phenomenology of intersubjective interaction (Honneth & Markle, 2004:383). Indeed, since these types of recognition point to different embodied and affective modes in which injustice is experienced, the critique of justice specifically begins on the basis of phenomenological experience. Honneth endorses what he calls the 1980s' scholarly re-discovery of Merleau-Ponty. For him, it is a return to the "pragmatic and phenomenological traditions" of social philosophy, the intention to bring the totality of human experience and relations into the analysis (Honneth, 1995b:151). Furthermore, the phenomenological dimension is not limited to the impact of injustice. In developing recognition theory, Honneth also draws on Bourdieu's insights to explain social integration through core intersubjective relations that are understood as a struggle for symbolic domination (Deranty, 2009a:340; Honneth, 1995d).

Honneth is thus committed to upholding the centrality of the experiential dimension in the analysis of recognition phenomena (Smith & Deranty, 2012b:26). He endorses detailed phenomenological descriptions that "draw us sufficiently close to the behavioural features in question" (Honneth, 1995d:194) and the meanings attached to them by the indi-

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viduals involved. Against types of functionalist or structuralist theorising that overlook or disregard subjective experience in the explanatory and critical aims of theory, Honneth (2012g:195–196) places the phenomenological moment at the heart of his work in social theory and social critique. As discussed in Chapter [Two](#), this approach to social critique is compelling in epistemic and practical terms because it is critique of immanent norms, that is, norms that already exist in subjective and social reality, not norms applied arbitrarily from an external viewpoint (Deranty, 2012a:158). Overall, Honneth's stance reflects the tradition of critical theory in which empirical social science and abstract philosophical theorising are understood to be in a dialectical relation, one of reciprocal dependence where each corrects and enriches the other (Deranty, 2010a).

This project is based on such an approach, relying as it does on subjective perceptions and experiences captured in fieldwork narratives as one of its primary sources of research data. What then of the relationship between the everyday multiculturalism researcher's interpretations of phenomena gathered in the experiential life-world and theory construction? At the epistemic level, phenomenological description of subjective experience is understood as contributing to knowledge building. In this regard, Honneth's recognition theory is "strongly suitable for analysing empirical research" because, in true critical theory tradition, it connects social experience, critique and theoretical explanation (Smith & Deranty, 2012b:13/18). As we saw in the preceding chapter, Honneth prioritises the subjective experience of society's members and their perceptions of injustice when recognition relations do not meet their moral expectations. Indeed, he proposes that it is the norms underpinning subjects' critique of unmet moral expectations of recognition that drives impetus for emancipatory change.

Thus at the methodological level, it seems possible to argue that recognition theory and everyday multiculturalism share a commitment to phenomenologically oriented research. At this point, however, it is worth emphasising that neither approach considers that such an orientation alone can address all dimensions of the social world. While advocating for the inclusion of subjective experience in analysis of the social, both Merleau-Ponty and Bourdieu always maintained in view the force and impact of social structures and institutional systems. One of the points of

an embodied approach is to ascertain the ways in which structures are 'lived' by subjects and, as the case may be, can be transformed by them on that basis. In other words, the shift in focus to the phenomenological does not lead to overlooking the force of societal structures. If anything, the embodied experiential approach makes the case for the powerful influence of social structures even stronger, since at first the theorist is able to demonstrate the extent to which social, cultural and ideological frames are inscribed in subjects' bodies well beneath the reflective and discursive levels. These crucial two-way connections between the subjective and the structural, the micro and the macro, are the subject of the next section.

Micro-Macro Analytical Links

The second compatibility between recognition theory and everyday multiculturalism is identified in the dialectical link between micro and macro levels of analysis. In the sociology of everyday life, micro analysis highlights the influence of lived phenomena on broader societal patterns, while analysis at the macro level illuminates the institutional forces that constitute the backdrop to daily life (Giddens, 2006:25–26). Everyday multiculturalists take up this complex two-way relationship, which might encompass middle-level phenomena as well (Amin, 2010, 2012; Butcher & Harris, 2010; Hage, 1998, 2003; Noble, 2005, 2009c; Stratton, 2006; Wise & Velayutham, 2009b). Researchers aim to identify the ways in which commonplace cross-cultural practices influence wider social patterns and politics, and the means whereby institutional forces and societal discourses "filter through to the realm of everyday practice, exchange and meaning-making" (Wise & Velayutham, 2009a:3).

Methodical attention to the associations between the practical and the structural levels of analysis is also a vital feature of recognition theory (Thompson & Yar, 2011a:6) and the wider critical theory tradition in which Honneth is located (Anderson, 2011; Honneth, 1995f, 1996; Petherbridge, 2011b). One crucial influence on Honneth in this respect is Jürgen Habermas (1990), who draws a key conceptual distinction between life-world and system in his theory of communicative action. The life-world, considered by Habermas a vital component of

inquiry into social life, is understood to refer to “the concrete experience and relationships of its occupants”, while the system constitutes “the underlying ties that firmly anchor them in the metropolitan ensemble” (Wacquant, 2008:46, drawing on Habermas, 1984). These systems, such as the legal, economic and political systems, emerge from specialised areas of modern social life and contain their own internal logic. Although Honneth goes ‘beyond communication’ to locate social integration in all forms of intersubjective interaction and not just discursive exchange, thus reaching to the fundamental “perceptual capacities and habitual behaviour of individuals” (Deranty, 2009a:177), he maintains the dynamic connection between life-world and societal forces (Anderson, 2011:55). Indeed, Honneth aims to correct the strong dualism between the two realms in Habermas by showing the ways in which the experiential and the systemic are intrinsically welded to each other.

As already intimated, Honneth understands the intrinsic link between the subjective and the structural as occurring most specifically around the problem of injustice. In this regard, Honneth (1995f:166–167) draws inspiration from the work of Moore (1978) and Thompson (1980) to establish the relationship between normative moral action, which targets the social structures responsible for the different forms of injustice, and subjective experiences of injustice, which he describes as embodied in the silent disapproval and collective protest of suppressed groups (Honneth, 2007b:83). Such moral disapproval is not abstracted into a system of norms for action that is removed from the specific situations in which it emerges. After all, a social theory (Honneth, 1995f) that establishes the intersubjective constitution of human self-relations and autonomy must, by definition, pay attention to the wider social conditions that situate and shape subjective experience and vice versa. Other researchers working within a recognition framework also emphasise the two-way connections between lived experience and structural forces (Meer, 2012; Mendonca, 2011; Nierling, 2012; Thomas, 2012; Thompson & Yar, 2011b).

In the broader sense, the importance of the relation between the micro and macro in everyday multiculturalism and recognition theory points towards the integration of the subjective-objective, agency-structure ten-

sions that have traditionally existed in the social sciences (Giddens, 2006:105). Again Bourdieu's work, focused as it is on understanding the relationship between the human agent's subjective experience and the objective social structure, is particularly salient in both research areas. Bourdieu (2000:146–150) maintains that, while phenomenology breaks with the 'scholastic vision of the world' and instead describes the subjective experience of the social world as self-evident, it provides itself with no means of accounting for the social conditions that make the experience possible. He thus argues for the inclusion of objective social structures in analysing the subjective, cognitive and affective experience of the human subject. Specifically, Bourdieu set out to study the means whereby 'society seeps into people' through the circular relationship between 'social field' and 'habitus'. Because some of the analysis in Part Two of this book utilises habitus as a key notion, it is worth providing a little more detail here regarding these important concepts.

Bourdieu's term 'social field' extends the physical metaphor of a field of forces into the social realm. It designates a dynamic, semi-autonomous, structured social space or network of social relations, such as in the academic, artistic, legal and media domains. Within each domain, particular 'rules of engagement' define the relative positions of the groups and agents in that space (Bourdieu, 1998:40–41). From Bourdieu's critical class perspective, powerful groups establish social fields as systems of domination to define class boundaries and social and cultural capital, and to translate "symbolic distinction into closure" (Lamont & Molnár, 2002:172, citing Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). The objective social field places membership requirements on its participants, such as legitimate opinions, modes of behaviour and ways of relating, and in response the human agent develops the expected psychosomatic, bodily, affective and cognitive dispositions. Bourdieu names these dispositions 'habitus'. The term refers to the mostly unconscious everyday habits that are deeply held in the body and sense memory so that they become as a taken-for-granted 'second skin'. The social field provides both the conditions for the evolution of habitus and also the conditions for its actualisation, and vice versa (Garrett, 2010:35). We can take Bourdieu's concepts beyond his original focus on 'cultural adaptation to social class' (Honneth, 1995d:194), to perceive the subjective-objective, agency-structure levels linked in a complex power dynamic.

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For everyday multiculturalists (see particularly Bennett et al., 2013; Hage, 1998, 2003; Noble, 2013b; Noble & Watkins, 2003; Wacquant, 1995; Wise, 2009b) and those interested in investigating relations of recognition, these theoretical resources and the interplay between different levels of analysis more widely are significant aspects of social research.

Thus it seems that everyday multiculturalism and recognition theory share the aim of dialectically combining the micro, mezzo and macro levels of analysis. Lived experience is instructive, and it takes place within powerful cultural, social and economic institutions and ideologies. Both dimensions of social phenomena, that is, agency and structure, must therefore be included and worked with to draw out linkages of significance, especially linkages that point to systems of domination and subordination. It is important to emphasise here that the macro-sociological approach offered by Honneth's focus on institutionally mediated recognition complements the contextual nature of an everyday approach, and thereby somewhat addresses the criticism that such interactionist approaches are deficient to the extent that they do not say enough about the larger structural context within which intersubjective interaction takes place. Moreover, the everyday multiculturalism and recognition models combine the empirical and the theoretical. Empirical research with a specific community of real individuals brings focused attention to the fluidities, nuances and ambivalences of each of those individual lives, as well as the complex intersubjective dynamics of everyday engagement. Scholars then turn to rich theoretical resources to assist in making sense of what they find in the everyday world, building on knowledge in an iterative process that productively combines the empirical and the theoretical. In focusing on intercultural relations of recognition at work, this book is situated within and is an important contribution to this research tradition regarding the analytical connections between subjectivity and objectivity, human agency and societal structure, the empirical and the theoretical.

A Critique of Cultural Essentialism

In addition to their shared interest in phenomenology and micro-macro analytical links, a third parallel between everyday multiculturalism and Honneth's recognition model can be found in their critique of cultural

essentialism and identity politics. These notions have already been introduced in previous chapters, but some repetition is necessary to approach the argument here. From a multiculturalism-from-below perspective, one of the unintended consequences of the top-down focus on group representation has been the tendency to ‘essentialise’ visible minorities. Ethno-cultural groups become defined as reified categories and are always on the brink of coming into conflict with other groups. Ethno-cultural identity then tends to refer to something akin to an absolute or primordial essence, rather than encompassing the notion of mutual encounters constructed relationally by individuals from different cultural origins (Nederveen Pieterse, 2007:25; Noble, 2009b:59–61; Semi et al., 2009:66; Wise, 2009a:34–41).

Indeed, Noble (2009b:46/61–62), a prominent researcher in the Australian everyday multiculturalism field, critiques Taylor’s influential multicultural theorising for upholding the public recognition of particular group identities and their rights over the public recognition of all citizens as human beings (Taylor, 1994). Aside from the democratic impetus informing this position, such favouring can have negative practical impacts for migrant groups. For example, the mainstream multiculturalism model targets culturally specific services funded by the state but delivered by the ethnic organisations themselves (Koleth, 2010:7). Well-intentioned and self-evident in many respects, this policy reifies the identities of immigrant individuals who are by definition singular and whose identities might well be, in fact, quite malleable. The model also creates the perception that ethnic communities are responsible for assisting ‘their migrants’ to settle into Australian life, thus liberating other citizens from personal responsibility and involvement (Wise, 2009a:41).

As discussed earlier, one aim of the everyday approach is to take multiculturalism beyond its inherent essentialism and idealism. As Sherman (2009) argues, an “everyday blurring” of the ‘multi’ in multicultural suggests “a far more fluid experience of difference than is captured in the calcified discourses of multiculturalism”. Collective identities are both layered and contextual, with differences produced and practised “in the messy interstices of daily life” (Sherman, 2009:175–176). A research lens set up at the level of daily interaction enables an exploration of what it means to ‘inhabit multiculturalism’, facilitating the mapping and analysis-

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ing of the “flows of cross-cultural encounter” (Noble, 2009b:62). Everyday multiculturalism research into the ‘lived intercultural’ thus goes beyond essentialism and ‘top-down’ multicultural ideals to reveal complex power relations, rational and irrational practices, layered degrees of tolerance and intolerance, and nuanced levels of comfort and discomfort regarding racial, ethnic and cultural difference.

Although Honneth’s work has not been directly concerned with ethno-cultural groups and their identities as such, his approach can be said to share this critique of primordial identities and recognition politics. However, as noted in earlier chapters, he goes beyond the everyday perspective in proposing that critique be focused on the group’s submersion in the symbolic order, its resultant invisibility in terms of influencing the value horizon which provides a reference system for the distribution of esteem recognition, and the unjust consequences of that exclusion for its members in terms of their ability to be self-realised autonomous subjects in the society. In that sense, it is not group inclusion but the inclusion or integration of minority group values in the value horizon that can potentially address ethno-cultural marginalisation. It needs to be emphasised that Honneth conceptualises value horizons in a non-essentialist light. Emerging through a social and cultural history, value horizons constitute a permeable framework of orientation or set of thematic threads to which members of specific socio-cultural groups are attached in varying degrees of solidarity.

From the everyday multiculturalism point of view, the individual’s attachment to values, as expressed through embodied action in prosaic life, are shaped by complex relational factors, transcultural contact, strategic concerns and individual circumstances which change moment to moment, day to day, year to year (Noble, 2007; Wise, 2013). The recognition model is compatible with this approach because its focus on the relations of recognition brings a relational lens to cross-cultural study that can be conceived of at the subjective as well as other levels of analysis, as will be demonstrated in the empirical chapters of the book to come. Everyday multiculturalists, and those working in the critical recognition field to which this project is a contribution, maintain a view both of the complexity and fluidity of individual value systems as well as the overarching structural system, which from Honneth’s perspective sees certain

groups' value interpretations of key societal norms, 'flexibly unified' as they may be, sidelined while others take precedence. This brings the discussion to issues of power, hegemony and emancipation, major concerns for both everyday multiculturalism and Honneth.

A Critical Emancipatory Agenda

The fourth area of compatibility between everyday multiculturalism and recognition theory points in the direction of a shared emancipatory agenda. From the everyday multiculturalism perspective, inequality and its consequences in terms of social justice are central targets of critique. One argument is that, through the impetus of mainstream multiculturalism, ethnic identity may derive more through a process of subordinated 'othering' by a dominant group than from 'ethnic roots' as such, and then subsequently be internalised (Nederveen Pieterse, 2007:26). Moreover, formulations based on essentialised notions of ethnic culture can lead to the objectification of those cultures as spectacles. The result may be dehumanisation and marginalisation for members of minority ethno-cultural groups, as well as the repression of the discomforting discourse of race.

Indeed, Hage's influential critique turns the usual multiculturalist emphasis on ethnic migrants on its head. In his 1998 study of White Australians and Anglo decline, he argues that problems in Australian multicultural society stem from the paranoia and power of the 'invisible' majority settlers. While the tendency for migrants to integrate into society in a natural process of settlement is as "inevitable as the change they bring into that culture", the dominant White group continues to maintain control of the national space by welcoming, or not, the ethno-cultural diversity contributed by the migrant others, those 'third world-looking people' (Hage, 1998:18/233). In a similar vein, Stratton (1998:206–214) argues that official discourse idealises multiculturalism because it operates within the concept of a core culture, "the problematically named Anglo-Celtic culture". Thus multiculturalism has tended to be conveyed within a discourse of tolerance, harmony and anti-racism, "celebrating diversity only in its more palatable forms" (O'Connor, 2010:528), without challenging the power of the ascendant cultural group (Essed, 1996:2).

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According to this critique, it is a misconception to understand classical multiculturalism as representing the circumstances of the migrant groups it claims to address. Multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism and hybridity operate as ideals of cultural diversity in elite arenas while the realities are lived, often discontentedly, in different and usually poorer social spheres (Nederveen Pieterse, 2007:187; O'Connor, 2010:526). This perspective underlines the connections between class, ethnic, racial and gender inequality. In terms of class analysis, O'Connor (2010:526) claims "multiculturalism is celebrated, consumed and debated by the middle class and lived by the working class". Based on the understanding that everyday encounter plays a decisive role in influencing cross-cultural phenomena, everyday multiculturalism sets out to identify the critical justice issues which matter to subjects on the ground. There is interest in the nuanced social practices which hinder, but also foster, ethical engagement and progressive interaction across ethnic and cultural difference (Collins, 2009:231–232; Hage, 2003:144–152; Lamont & Aksartova, 2002:17–18; Noble, 2009b:50–60, 2013a:162; Wise, 2009a:24–37).

Thus despite a wide spectrum of endeavour, the overall purpose of everyday multiculturalism can be simply expressed—to address social marginalisation and fragmentation and promote social equality, integration and progressive practices in intercultural contexts. The aim is to achieve an interactional order in which 'ethnic others' experience themselves as equal and autonomous agents rather than as second-class citizens, their humanity and contributions recognised and valued. Hage (2003) perhaps best captures the spirit of the everyday multiculturalism perspective, at least in Australia, in his now famous pedestrian crossing story. Ali, a Lebanese migrant whom Hage interviewed during fieldwork, spends hours crossing and recrossing a certain pedestrian crossing so that he can continue to experience the moment when traffic stops for him. Hage likens Ali's experience to the recognition of a person's existential importance as a human being. That recognition, he argues, is a social gift, which a moral society offers its members, thereby obligating them to act ethically and justly towards one another. Some might argue that there remains an echo of paternalism in the everyday multiculturalism ethos. However, as described earlier, it seeks to delve into the structural elements of multiculturalism by analysing the experiences and perspectives

“of people who are living it” (O’Connor, 2010:527), which ultimately implicates both resident and migrant. The approach thus aims to bring a critical filter to bear upon the paternalistic and hegemonic discourse and practice of mainstream multiculturalism. This ethical social justice tradition is a powerful motivation for those who engage in everyday multiculturalism research. It is an ethos shared by theorists of the Critical School such as Honneth.

Ideals of social justice unify and animate the critical theory tradition in which Honneth is situated, and from which he draws essential theoretical resources in formulating recognition theory (Honneth, 1995f, 2007a, 2012b). The Critical School encompasses the tradition of social inquiry initiated by Marxian-oriented philosophers at the University of Frankfurt’s Institute for Social Research in 1924 (Honneth, 2009:vii; Wiggershaus, 1994:24), although it has developed and diversified significantly since its early days (Anderson, 2011:31). Recognition theory belongs to this critical tradition insofar as it is concerned with the exploration of, and emancipation from, “the social causes of a pathology of human rationality” (Honneth, 2009:vii). Honneth is particularly interested in the diagnoses of social pathologies rooted in the structures of social domination and subordination, an interest that is shared by Bourdieu. More than simply a critique of existing injustice though, for Honneth the grounds of that normative critique must carry the potential for immanently motivated social change or moral transcendence (Petherbridge, 2011a:1). Recognition theory attempts to provide “a convincing justification of our ethical judgements concerning the necessary requirements of a good and well-lived human life” (Honneth, 2007c:41). Thus the ultimate point of social research framed by the theory of recognition is to address impediments to ‘the good, the just and the well-lived life’, in other words to eliminate barriers to the self-realisation and autonomy of subjects (Smith, 2012c:89). Despite differences in conceptual approach and levels of analysis, this fundamental ideal sits compatibly with the motivational basis of everyday multiculturalism.

This second section of the chapter has argued that everyday multiculturalism lends itself to an investigation of intercultural (mis)recognition at work because its phenomenological orientation, attention to the dialectical linkages between human agency and societal structure, critique of

cultural essentialism and critical emancipatory agenda are compatible with Honneth's social and practical philosophy. These perspectival parallels between the two traditions ground the book's qualitative research methodology, which is discussed in the next section.

The Research Methodology

The book's empirical material regarding intercultural (mis)recognition at work was sourced through in-depth qualitative research with Pacific Islanders, as members of a minority ethno-cultural group in Australia. This third section of the chapter will describe and discuss the research methodology, including the gathering and analysis of empirical material, questions related to epistemology, ontology, representation, ethics and the ethnographer's position in a post-colonial field, and other related issues.

Within the qualitative research tradition, ethnography presented itself as the most suitable method for gathering and analysing data. Contemporary ethnographic research shares many of the commonalities of approach with everyday multiculturalism and recognition theory, as they have been described above. Indeed, phenomenological experience in everyday contexts constituting its 'bread and butter' (Willis, 2000:viii), ethnography and 'ethnographic encounter' in various forms are commonly employed in critical everyday multiculturalism research (Essed, 1991; Harris, A., 2010; Lattas, 2009; Noble, 2007, 2013a; O'Connor, 2010; Parker, 2000; Swanton, 2010; Velayutham, 2009; Wise, 2005). Ethnographers pursue a generative, dialectical relationship when attempting to tease out the interplay between grounded human agency and structural forces, between practice and theory (Nolan & Anyon, 2004:145). Furthermore, an implicit social justice impulse underlies much contemporary ethnographic work, especially in intercultural research, lending its ear to the ebbs and flows of lived inequality, difference and conflict in daily life (Noble, 2009d; Swanton, 2010; Wise & Velayutham, 2009b). During the 12 months of ethnographic fieldwork that informs this book, the dialectical process between the empirical and the conceptual generated insights into relations of recognition at work,

insights that emphasise the nuances of such relations and confirm the worth of Honneth's recognition framework in cross-cultural inquiry.

Ethnography has colonial-era origins in European anthropological studies of non-European groups conceived of and 'gazed upon' as bounded, static cultures (Brewer, 2000:11; Bryman, 2001:xi–xiv). However, significantly influenced by the urban traditions of Chicago School sociology (Venkatesh, 2002; Wacquant, 2002), Birmingham School cultural studies and more recently by powerful post-modern critique, ethnography has moved far beyond these dubious beginnings (Brown, 2004:300–306; Willis & Trondman, 2000:6). It represents an established if contestable and variable approach to generating valid data regarding the social and cultural worlds, and facilitating critical reflection upon it, in many disciplines across the social sciences (Alexander, 2006:399; Grbich, 2013:56; Wacquant, 2003:5–7). However an ethnographic design, as part of the larger set of qualitative research approaches, comes with its own menu of critical questions and methodological issues. Some of these are discussed below in the context of this research.

The Gathering of Empirical Material

Ethnography aims to capture the perceptions and responses, and the meanings ascribed to them, of research participants in the natural evolving contexts of their everyday lives. The research thus usually centres on an intensive period of fieldwork, emphasising a grounded investigation of, "at least partly *in its own terms*, the irreducibility of human experience" (Willis & Trondman, 2000:5). In accord with this approach, the empirical material presented and analysed in this book was collected during 18 months of fieldwork.

Two main ethnographic methods were used, participant observation and semi-structured interviews. In terms of participant observation, ethnographic researchers often 'hang out' in a locality, the better to observe, converse, interview and participate and thus gain a deeper appreciation of insider perspectives and social processes (Giddens, 2006:85). Such 'hanging out' in this research was undertaken in public spaces, shopping malls, squares, train stations, bus shelters, sporting facilities, parks and streets, all of which facilitated a 'feel for the locality'.

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Many other opportunities for observation, interaction and participation emerged through attendance at meetings, seminars, local agencies, work sites, community gatherings, schools, church events and neighbourhood festivals. Thirty-four semi-structured interviews were also undertaken, with interviewees often recruited at these meetings and events and through the snowballing effects of social networks (Small, 2009:14). These participants, 14 men and 20 women, were first- and second-generation migrants invariably of Polynesian ancestry, ranging in age between 19 and 67 years. Through transnational processes, most of the first generation professed to maintain strong links with 'the islands', while a number of the second generation had spent significant amounts of time in the homeland. The interviews constituted a rich source of empirical data, garnering as they did participants' responses and perceptions, and their reflections on the social conditions surrounding those responses and perceptions.

Ethnographic fieldwork involves flexibility and iterative reflection so as to accommodate the fundamental role of subjectivity in the research process (Brewer, 2000:18; Hammersley, 2013:12). Such an open-ended approach was required in the interview processes of this research. For example, an interview guide that focused on different domains of life was initially used to elicit trustworthy data regarding participants' experiences and perspectives. It was designed to begin with 'big picture' questions but it was quickly realised that interviewees needed time to warm up to the topics. Thus biographical narratives and migration stories gradually replaced the big picture questions because they constituted a more natural warming-up process, and this eventually led to the reformulation of the interview guide. It was often the case too that topics arose naturally in the course of narrating transnational relocation, especially themes related to work and income as these had more often than not been the motivating force in the decision to migrate.

Furthermore, the term 'interview' turned increasingly into an impediment with its "connotations of officialdom", as one respondent remarked. As the primary aim of the interview was to elicit the participant's voice, an informal, conversational approach was adopted which sometimes saw interviews last up to two hours. Grbich (2013:216) notes that face-to-face interviews can elicit lengthy responses, facilitating the revelation of

human experience as story. The richest data in this fieldwork often emerged during such relaxed and comfortable ‘reflexive dialogue’. Time was taken to respond to interesting digressions, to pursue the paths opened up by surprise cues (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006:487 citing Van Maanen, 1983) and reflect upon them at a leisurely pace. One of the early interviewees commented when invited to participate, “It’s not one of those survey type things is it, where you have to answer questions? I’ve done those before. Us Pacific islanders like to take our time, you know, have more of a conversation”. Given that the researcher was a non-Pacific Islander inquiring into recognition and misrecognition experienced by Pacific Islanders, and given the ethics of research with ethnic communities (discussed below), it was important that fieldwork processes reflect the values of participants while continuing to pose ‘good questions’ (Yin, 2011:27) and follow through on emerging insights.

The Analysis of Empirical Material

The material sourced during fieldwork was collected and analysed through an iterative process, which saw various dimensions and the dynamic relationships between them develop cyclically and cumulatively (Grbich, 2013:17–24/61; Small, 2009:26–27). Each new participant added original material that led to the reassessment of understandings that had been developed up to that point. This re-evaluation then contributed to the refinement of empirical and theoretical directions, which then informed subsequent interviews, conversations and participant observations, until a set of thematic threads had consolidated. Furthermore, the researcher encountered some of the participants several times during fieldwork, which provided opportunities to discuss the anonymous reflections of other respondents. These conversations added substantially to cross fertilisation, depth of understanding and triangulation of data (Yin, 2011:11–13), in a way that would not have been possible in a series of single interviews. Such an effect confirms the benefits of ethnography, whereby interviews are part of a wider immersion in the locality.

Thus the analytical process involved constant interpretative effort, a rich generative process that Crouch and McKenzie (2006:491) aptly name “a spiral of conceptual development”. It included analysis of the

empirical material by social domains and by emergent thematic threads in regard to cross-cultural relations of recognition, which were unknown at the beginning of the study. As the research proceeded, significant underlying mechanisms of recognition and their connection to wider social processes emerged. The different modes whereby Pacific Island participants experienced recognition and misrecognition at work became increasingly clearer, particularly in relation to ethno-racial identification, occupation and occupational tasks, and work practices. Observational data and excerpts drawn from interviews, “narrative fragments” as Swanton (2010:2347) names them, contributed significantly to the development of the analytical framework of the book and are woven throughout its empirical chapters.

Willis (2000:viii) provides a characterisation of ethnography as “the eye of the needle through which the threads of the imagination must pass”. This research saw the ethnographic researcher as the embodied eye of the needle through which varied threads, that is, the empirically sourced subjective meanings and the theoretically located constructs, themselves heterogeneous, passed backwards and forwards, rubbing up against each another, infecting one another, swirling, entangling, falling away and reappearing in what seemed an incomprehensible iterative layering of the abstract and real. The ethnographer routinely lives on the edge, tolerating uncertainty and disorientation but maintaining a sense of overall direction (Mills & Gibb, 2004:204). After the regular loss of threads and bouts of deep confusion, some sense of the dialectal interplay between the phenomenological and the conceptual regarding cross-cultural (mis)recognition at work emerged and forms the heart of the three empirical chapters in Part Two of this book.

Questions of Epistemology, Ontology, Representation and Ethics

Qualitative research invariably raises questions regarding epistemology, ontology and representation. The first question raised here highlights ethnography’s epistemological status, in terms of both the sources of knowledge and the knowledge-building process. By its very nature, contemporary ethnographic research implies a theoretical sensitivity to the importance

of phenomenological experience in human affairs (Schütz, 1972). Subjects are understood as “meaning making in context” (Willis, 2004:169), ‘knowledgeable, active, creative, insurgent’ (Brewer, 2000:22). While meanings are circumscribed by structural and institutional location, individuals are understood as possessing a practical consciousness which enables them to ‘know’ social life from the inside, as well as the discursive ability to articulate their understandings (Brewer, 2000:22). Knowledge as far as this book is concerned is sourced from ‘insiders’, that is, from the perspectives of research informants living their normal conditions of existence.

Already established in preceding sections but worth restating here, everyday multiculturalists and Honneth strongly share this crucial assumption against all forms of functionalism and structuralism in the social sciences, which tend to overlook or deny subjective knowledge and agency. As with all subjects, the Pacific Islanders who participated in this research live a life of their own which is to them ‘normal, reasonable, meaningful’, to paraphrase Goffman (1961:ix–x) in a new context. On the very basis of their expectations of everyday normalcy and meaningfulness, Pacific Islanders also experience frustrations and forms of maladjustment, which the research is especially interested in as it investigates modes of intercultural recognition and misrecognition. Ethnographic fieldwork allowed this ‘subjective researcher’ (Grbich, 2013:4/17; Hammersley, 2013:13; Yin, 2011:13) to, for a time, get close to and learn about those lives, perspectives, positive encounters and negative experiences, particularly as they relate to the domain of work.

In terms of the knowledge-building process, the sociological validity of ethnography and qualitative research more widely is premised on a recursive intellectual process that combines subjective authenticity, depth of insight and breadth of scholarly influence. Results obtained from its methods, in this case participant observation and semi-structured interviews, potentially contribute a depth of authentic understanding because, as argued above, ‘knowing respondents’ are “engaged in permanent dialogue with their environment” both as ‘doing agents’ and as ‘endurers of the social structure’ (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006:493). As well as depth, breadth is developed through the researcher’s recursive interpretations of, and critical reflections on, emerging empirical themes as they intersect

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with existing theoretical knowledge (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006:493; Grbich, 2013:61). This process, described earlier in relation to the analysis of data, connects subjective and social experience, theoretical explanation and critique. It can lead to the construction of relevant conceptual frameworks with which to work through and disseminate research findings, as it did in this case. The iterative process is thus an essential aspect in establishing the epistemological strength and validity of an ethnographic methodology, and qualitative research more broadly.

It is this epistemological reasoning, underlining some of the differences between quantitative and qualitative approaches, that justifies aspects of this ethnographic research such as its small interview sample. Based on the logic developed above, where the researcher has facilitated an authentic association with the participants and an iterative reflective process, just a few intensive interviews that aim for depth, nuance and context can contribute rich insights to social knowledge (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006:483; Hammersley, 2013:9–14). Furthermore, Yin's 'case study logic' firms up the iterative process and thus the validity, even the analytical generalisability, of explanation based on ethnographic inquiry (Small, 2009:24–25, drawing on Yin, 2003). Unable to finalise the number of cases at the start, the researcher begins by participating in 'how and why' conversations and interviews to discover unknown social processes. As described earlier in the context of this research, each new participant, conceived of as an individual 'case', contributes new material which adds to, but also generates reassessment and refinement of, thematic strands already noted. This extending case process searches for societal significance by accumulating a set of themes, and also progressively revealing complexities, contradictions and nuances noteworthy within those themes, until a point of thematic saturation is reached (Grbich, 2013:17/61; Small, 2009:20–27).

The next critical question focuses on the ontological stability of racial, ethnic and cultural categories. In aiming to gather Pacifica migrant's experiences and perceptions of (mis)recognition in everyday workplaces, the research positions Pacific Islanders as a social group characterised by their own and others' perceptions of a unique ethno-racial heritage and culture. The vast literature on race, ethnicity and culture, some of which is cited in Chapter [Five](#), is shot through with imprecise definitions, increasingly complex theorisations and intense debates. Some theorists

(Alexander, 2006:397; Nederveen Pieterse, 2004:27; Swanton, 2010:2338) note that these bounded categories are commonly understood in scholarship as social and political constructions. This makes for difficulties in the academic discourse on race especially, because to use the term 'race' is to reinforce it as real and run the risk of naturalising it, but to ignore it is to act as if race was no longer a significant differentiating variable in the social world (Keith, 2005:249; Omi & Winant, 2002:124; Scheurich & Young, 1997:12; Webster, 1992:22). Furthermore, constructionism is critiqued as outdated by critical race theorists, who argue that ethnographic race research be conceived more as a bodily performative process producing situated meanings and identities without ontological permanence (Alexander, 2006:403; Amin, 2012:93–96; Bulmer & Solomos, 2004:9; Gilroy, 2000:6/11; Nayak, 2006:411).

Race entangled relations of recognition, that under a recognition framework permeate the everyday world, are understood in this book in both constructionist and post-constructionist lights. Racial, ethnic and cultural categories may have no ontological permanence. However, as social and political constructions they continue to be the source of cultural resources and values, which contribute to a vital sense of identity as well as also constituting negative sources of denigration, marginalisation and material inequality. Furthermore, through its power as a dualistic concept and as the source of cultural and social resources through which identities are shaped and supported, ethnic and racial difference is understood as influencing social relations via indeterminate and contextualised 'performance' in everyday life. Both these circumstances call for a continued scholarly lens on ethno-racial phenomena in the life-world.

Following on from this discussion of epistemology, ontology and validity, are critical questions regarding the status of representative voices posed especially by post-modern critique (Brewer, 2000:23–26; Brown, 2004:300). The notion of the objective, active, value-free researcher and the accessible, passive, value-laden research subject is long discredited (Alexander, 2006:399; Grbich, 2013:17). In this ethnographic inquiry, the process between researcher and researched was dialogical. Each brought to the research encounter a subjective tangle of embodied pre-reflexive and reflexive experience, thought and judgement, and each negotiated their own voice. Although in the research-to-text process the

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researcher's interpretative voice dominates, a concerted effort was made to ensure that participant voices were represented in their full agency and authenticity, including their own linguistic style. The wider justification for the strong presence of the researcher's agency rests, in line with the emancipatory ethos of ethnography, everyday multiculturalism and recognition theory, on a concern with highlighting social conditions, specifically pathological social conditions which shape the misrecognition of Pacific Islanders at work in Australia.

Related to the question of representation, is the ethnographer's ethical conduct and symbolic and structural position in the post-colonial field (Willis & Trondman, 2000:7). Some heart was taken from Willis' advice to avoid getting 'hung up' on post-modern debates concerning methodology, ethnographic authority, power and "the slippages of discursive meaning understood from an abstract post-structuralism" (Willis, 2004:169). This is a current critique of the post-modern position, whereby the researcher's self-reflexivity might narcissistically over-shadow the participant voice in ethnographic inquiry (Brown, 2004:309). As Willis (2004:169) exhorts with passion, 'Tell your readers something new and significant through the eyes of your research subjects rather than being waylaid by a monologue regarding the bourgeois formation and structural position of the ethnographic writer'. This is, of course, easier said than done when the researcher's 'formation' alludes to the historical and current power imbalances of race and class.

Indeed, given the history of Western colonialism in the Pacific and its traditional monopoly on portraying 'colonised others' as inferior in global contexts (Pulotu-Endemann & Peteru, 2001:123–126; Senft, 1998:119), and given that research is always an intervention of some kind (Fontes, 1998:7), the most haunting dilemma faced was the legitimacy and authority of an ethnographer of European ancestry amongst Pacifica research participants. As Pacific Islanders have reclaimed their cultural knowledge and narrative authority, research by Western academics or even by Pacifica people with Western educations is susceptible to accusations of neo-colonial exploitation or paternalism (Burt, 1998:97; Wassmann, 1998:17). Swanton (2010:2337) notes that ethnographic fieldwork positions the researcher awkwardly in the complex processes of cultural and ethnic difference. At one seminar during fieldwork, the sen-

sitive subject of colonial misrule made for awkward attendance for this Palagi (White Anglo) Aotearoa New Zealand-born researcher. The seminar was focused on the subjugation of Western Samoa under New Zealand rule in the 1900s and participants mourned those who had died in the related Black Saturday massacre and influenza epidemic.

Overtime, however, the sense of 'post-colonial angst' and awkwardness dropped away as the researcher began to engage with, and enter into the worlds of, Pacific Islanders in the locality. Amongst the participants, whose identities are disguised in the book through the use of fictional names, there was scant concern regarding the researcher's ethnographic credentials. Many brushed this topic aside as irrelevant, motivated instead by a desire to tell their stories and 'chew over' their reflections with a listening ear. As participants warmed to their narratives, it was obvious that many appreciated 'the conversation space', the authentic interest taken in their perspectives and the psychological doubling effect that seemed to deepen reflexivity. This suggests, perhaps, that an invitation to participate in research can constitute a positive form of recognition in itself, as long as it is conducted with an ethos of partnership and equality. The mitigation of possible psychological disturbance through the revelation of experiences of disrespect was addressed through the recruitment of a Pacifica cultural consultant, who agreed to act in an advisory capacity if required. This aspect of qualitative research highlights the necessity for an emotionally as well as theoretically literate researcher, especially when entailing topics that are not usually discussed in 'run-of-the-mill' daily life (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006:487).

Overall, what seemed to count in this research was the ability to be adaptive and flexible, to listen actively and observe non-judgementally, to hear the interviewee's words, note their feelings and underlying mood, comprehend the context within which the participant's perception of the world took place and infer the meaning intended (Yin, 2014:74). This is not to underplay the complex dynamics of power and inequality, both historic and contemporary, in ethnographic research. But it is to live with those tensions and continue to place the greater value on participant voices, in this case regarding the recognition relations of everyday work life, here and now. Overall, the ethos that has held this White middle-class researcher's nerve throughout has been the genuine desire for social

and political action to address racially, ethnically and culturally conceived misrecognition.

Other Issues

A number of other issues and limitations emerged during the course of the research. The first of these enrolls the negativistic methodology that underlies Honneth's critical theory, as it has been described in the previous chapter. In this regard, there existed the potential to skew the research fieldwork towards a single-minded focus on negative experience, a tendency noted by scholars working in the intercultural field (Noble, 2013a:181). This ethnography would then have become more of a search for examples of disrespect and misrecognition already concluded to exist in the field (Willis, 2004:175), while tending to overlook a multiplicity of other kinds of experiences, including that of respect and recognition. The interview guide assisted in this regard, in that it maintained an open-ended focus on Pacific Islanders' multiple experiences and viewpoints in many domains of life. Indeed, participant responses pointed to the multidimensional nature of everyday relations of recognition, revealing the ways in which meanings ascribed to experiences and perspectives can be elusive and fluid (Brewer, 2000:21).

Relatedly, some theorists note 'the ethnographer's preoccupation with the performance of difference' (Radano & Bohlman, 2000:1; Thomas, 1991:205). The book's focus being workplace relations of recognition across cultural difference, this preoccupation was unavoidable. As implied earlier, however, participant self-understandings of racial, ethnic and cultural identities are always complex, fluid and situational, involving multiple motivations that include, perhaps, the ambiguities of 'strategic essentialism' (Noble, 2007:333). It was important, therefore, to maintain an open-ended perspective regarding the mixed sources and comprehensions of recognition and misrecognition at work, those that appeared to reference race, ethnicity or culture and those that might be ascribed to other phenomena.

The evaluation of the credibility of fieldwork sourced experiences of (mis)recognition constitutes another significant issue and has been touched on already in the previous chapter. Experiences of recognition

and misrecognition are contingent, in that they depend on varied psychological dispositions and subjective responses. For example, the same set of misrecognition conditions might generate stoical acceptance in some subjects but disruptive resistance in others, depending on habituated disposition and other factors (Smith & Deranty, 2012a:62). Moreover, a respondent's claim of interpersonal misrecognition at work might be inappropriate or without credible foundation, expressing perhaps an outlook of habitual grievance rather than substantive injuries to self-esteem. This same dynamic might arise regarding the perception of esteem recognition, whereby a bolstering psychological effect is created that has no basis in intersubjective reality. Although there was no way to fully mitigate these issues of assessment in this research, the discursive, leisurely style of fieldwork interviews did assist in the evaluation of validity and authenticity. It was possible to delve at depth into experiences of recognition and misrecognition and thus clarify their contexts, as well as untangle some of the complexity of meaning and affect which participants brought to their reflections. The technique of triangulation or crosschecking data, undertaken through multiple conversations and regular participation in meetings, also made it possible to access different interpretations of similar phenomena.

Related to the question of credibility, other issues including those associated with post-colonial legacies intruded into the fieldwork at times. Sometimes it seemed as though participants were less than frank, relaying to the Palagi (White) researcher what they thought she might prefer to hear rather than authentic reflection. Some of the motivation possibly came from a felt need to present a rosier picture of the locality to the outsider than was real. By way of contrast, one participant seemed to feel the need to exaggerate negative aspects to make a grievance case for special assistance. As Willis (Mills & Gibb, 2004:221) comments, research informants are moved by pre-reflexive passions which they cannot necessarily explain. Fieldwork was also complicated by internal political tensions, particularly related to leadership and complex questions regarding representation and who held the authority to speak for the community. Sennett (2006:10–11) notes that a subjective investigation of social and cultural reality will inevitably

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contain contradiction, ambiguity and arrivals at dead-ends. It is the role of the researcher to pay attention to the causes and significance of such phenomena. The qualitative data collected during this ethnographic research was all the richer for its inherent contradictions and complexities.

Other limitations of the research highlight the theme of work, as well as the employment and age aspects of participant representation. The study, originally intending to cover several life domains, focused gradually on employment and unemployment as these topics emerged significantly in conversations and interviews with respondents. In hindsight, it is likely that a concentrated focus on work right from the beginning might have garnered an even wider and deeper range of insights. This benefit of hindsight is a classic bane of research. To paraphrase French philosopher Blaise Pascal (1623–1662), ‘We only know what to put into a book once we have finished writing it’. Regarding participant representation, professionals such as social workers, pastors, multicultural agency workers and education liaison officers were more accessible during research and thus tend to be over-represented compared to those working in blue-collar and semi-skilled employment sectors. A second discrepancy relates to the representation of age, with more interviews completed with workers in the 40 to 60 age bracket than the 20 to 40 range. The study’s validity is not premised on representativeness as such, aiming instead for in-depth analysis of the complex ways in which submersion in the dominant value horizon shapes the everyday relations of recognition experienced by Pacifica people. However, greater range across the participant community may have garnered particular sector-related and age-related aspects of (mis)recognition in the workplace. This reflection also raises, belatedly for this project, the possible value of focus groups in future research to harness insights through the dynamics of group reflection.

Furthermore, the official fieldwork component of the research was limited to relations of recognition from the point of view of Pacific Island migrants as members of a visible minority in Australia. It did not include interviews with members of other groups, including the dominant White group whose ethno-racial status remains largely taken for granted in the everyday world. However, the perspectives and opinions of others were

gathered from informal conversations, fieldwork observations and media commentary. Future research might be centred more explicitly on drawing out the complexities and nuances of (mis)recognition from the point of view of multiple participants in social encounters.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a brief introduction to everyday multiculturalism, as the research approach taken in this book. It has also determined the significant perspectival parallels between that approach to research and Honneth's recognition model, arguing that these two scholarly traditions have in common a phenomenological orientation, responsiveness to micro-macro analytical links, an anti-essentialist stance and a critical emancipatory ethos. The chapter has also presented the research methodology, grounded as it is in these compatibilities, including the specifics of the ethnographic research methods, ontological and epistemological justifications, and a discussion of issues to do with representation, the researcher's location in the post-colonial field and ethical considerations.

We now move on to Chapter [Four](#), the last chapter in the theoretical part of the book. It will bring together key conceptual elements to establish a framework for critically analysing the project's research findings that are presented in the empirical chapters of Part Two of the book.

Chapter Four

Work, Esteem Recognition and Multiculturalism

This chapter, the final chapter of Part One, brings together the key themes of the book, work, esteem recognition and multiculturalism, to establish a framework via which the project's research findings can be critically analysed. The previous chapter offered a brief introduction to everyday multiculturalism, the research approach taken in this book, and also delineated significant perspectival parallels between that tradition and Honneth's recognition model. Meanwhile, Chapter [Two](#) provided an outline of the main features of recognition theory as they pertain to this inquiry, the nub of which is the idea that subjects ideally develop positive self-relations, and therefore self-realisation and autonomy, through a dialogic process involving, crucially, recognition from fellow social subjects. It also established the usefulness of Honneth's concept of contested value horizon, in the sphere of esteem recognition, for investigations of recognition relations in intercultural contexts. In this sphere, wherein social valuation of individual distinctions, expertise and contributions is understood as constitutive in the growth of self-esteem, Honneth has specifically pinpointed the domain of work.

Thus this shorter chapter is a key bridging chapter in the book because it addresses the connection between the relevant conceptual elements in recognition theory and intercultural (mis)recognition in the world of

paid work. The first section focuses on the central role of work in recognition mediated integration, as it is conceived of in the recognition and work literature. The following section outlines the development of Honneth's three normative conceptions of work (recognition of working activity, achievement and contribution), particularly in relation to multicultural relations of esteem recognition. Reconstructions of these critical models are utilised to good effect in the book's analytical framework, which is presented in the final section of the chapter.

The Central Role of Work

Work gives you a sense of dignity and self-worth. It is essential for self-esteem and self-respect and for developing a sense of purpose. As well it connects you, or in the case of (previously) unemployed people, it reconnects you to the community.

Such was the comment made by a participant during an on-air discussion regarding the importance of work on the programme *Life Matters* (National Radio, Australian Broadcasting Corporation) one weekday morning in 2012. It was followed up by a number of listeners who phoned in to agree, to emphasise the vital importance of employment and to share the various ways in which their paid and unpaid jobs had assisted them to develop essential aspects of identity, positive self-relations, personhood and autonomy. Beyond these considerations, participants also spoke about the indispensable way in which work builds common social bonds, connecting the worker to a meaningful community of contributing co-workers.

There is no doubt that 'work is consequential for human life', well beyond economic transaction or technological imperative (Vallas, 2012:6). Even while neo-liberal changes have rendered wage labour less well paid and dependable, and impetus for economic de-growth endures, the world of paid work continues to be a principal means of economic and social exchange (Nierling, 2012:245; Schneider et al., 2010; Zurn, 2010:16). Deeply embedded in institutional and social contexts, work conveys significance in terms of both collective and individual integration.

Collectively, work is the basis of Western producer democracies in which economic contribution, citizenship responsibility and social utility are intertwined (Lamont, 2000:26), while individually, work is a central aspect of identity, subjective well-being and everyday life (Svendsen, 2008:2; Vallas, 2012:6; Zurn, 2010:16). In this regard, Honneth (2010:224) observes that the majority of subjects continue to attach their social identity primarily to their role in the organised productive process. Powerful cultural repertoires thus pertain to the domain of paid work. These repertoires emphasise the priority of 'being employed' and 'going to work', often over the demands of family life, and also underline the importance of industriousness, responsibility, self-reliance and self-respect while 'at work'. More than an attitude towards earning money, the work ethic constitutes a disciplined existence that orients subjects to 'a social life woven around the workplace and its demands' (Newman & Ellis, 1999:178).

Honneth (1995a, 1995f, 2010) also highlights the centrality of work. In a recent influential book chapter entitled 'Work and Recognition: A Redefinition', he provides two conceptual strands to his argument that paid work and the labour market underwrite subjective and societal integration (Honneth, 2010:236–237). Firstly, Honneth rejects a systems integration view based solely on considerations of economic efficiency, favouring instead a social integration position. He argues that the capitalist labour market relies on normative conditions for its social legitimacy and support, even if these conditions might be concealed beneath the appearance of the market's capacity for self-regulation. Secondly and relatedly, Honneth conceives of social labour in a non-instrumental sense. With predecessors such as Hegel, Marx and Durkheim, he argues for work's intrinsic value beyond means-ends rationality. According to Honneth, work should be understood as constituting both a contribution to the material reproduction of society and as an externalisation of the essential creativity, talents and contributions of the individual subject (Angella, 2016:342; Petersen & Willig, 2004:340).

Based on these two key assumptions, social over systems integration and work's intrinsic value, Honneth perceives the work domain as a pivotal arena of subjective and social integration, particularly in the third sphere of esteem recognition. In other words, work serves as a specific

arena of integration *because* it relies on normative principles *and because* it entails significant potential for the development of individuation, social identity, self-transformation and autonomy for subjects in society. The terms ‘self-esteem’ and ‘self-respect’, captured in the radio excerpt above, resonate with the normativity in Honneth’s conceptions. Employment-related disrespect potentially undermines the identity and self-transformation that subjects actively create through their work (Angella, 2016:342). This perspective explains why the domain of work is characterised by specific moral significance and emancipatory potential. In Smith’s well-chosen words, “The *moral* significance of work lies, to put it bluntly, in the contribution it makes (when not distorted) to a meaningful, fulfilled, dignified human life” (Smith, 2009:49). Honneth’s approach allows social critique regarding the currently prevailing world of paid work, and emancipatory struggles for due recognition at work, to appeal to moral principles pertaining to both the material conditions inasmuch as they impact on the physical functioning of the working subject, as well as the psycho-social or mental conditions of individual self-realisation through work (Petersen & Willig, 2004:340).

The emancipatory potential of work is, for Honneth, a typical instance of that cornerstone concept of the Critical School and of recognition theory, namely, ‘transcendence within immanence’ (Honneth, 2010:227–229; Smith, 2009:47/51; Smith & Deranty, 2012b:10). “The threshold to an immanent critique of the existing organization of societal labour is only crossed when moral norms are drawn upon which already constitute rational claims within the social exchange of services” (Honneth, 2010:227). Drawing on these premises and utilising an immanent methodology, critical empirical inquiry can aim to identify unmet moral expectations of recognition at work ‘that have yet to surface above the threshold of public articulation and political coordination’ (Honneth, 2007b:80–82). Critical research can analyse the ways in which social reality has met or failed these moral expectations that individuals bring to their work, which is the aim of this book. Such an investigation can thus provide greater understanding of the ways in which opportunities for self-transformation and self-realisation have been impeded or enhanced through work. As we know, the Honnethian ‘negativistic methodology’ highlights the experience of injustice at work, rather than the normative

adequacy of claims of injustice' (Deranty, 2009a:326/392), as constituting the first steps in this kind of critical inquiry.

Furthermore, an immanent critique can potentially identify situations where collective awareness of disappointed expectations of recognition at work may harbour the first traces of a struggle for recognition. Such impetus, if transformed into a social and political movement, might set out to challenge, change or transcend the current arrangements of the social division of labour. It is possible to analyse some progressive political and cultural movements as struggles for the recognition of types of work that have traditionally remained under the radar of public visibility. In this regard, Smith and Deranty (2012a:58/63) highlight industrial conflicts driven by worker anger at the lack of valuing of their work efforts and feminist struggles to overcome the non-recognition of the unpaid labour that women have traditionally engaged in, such as domestic service, childcare and voluntary work.

The widespread devaluation of traditional 'migrant work' in Western countries, discernible through the low status in which it is held and the low pay that it attracts, constitutes another example of misrecognised work. But typically, with regard to the employment experiences of Pacific Island migrants in Australia, with which this book is concerned, potential struggles for recognition remain immanent and largely submerged. They have not risen above 'the threshold of political articulation' (Honneth, 2007b:87) to emerge as visible emancipatory movements aimed at challenging the symbolic and practical meanings of accomplishment and contribution through work. One could speculate that neo-liberal work practices, employment insecurity, intra-cultural disunity and migrant marginalisation are influencing factors in this regard. In any case, this is typically an area where the sensitivity provided by Honneth's model regarding forms of social injustice and suffering that are maintained beneath the threshold of public visibility and political articulation, seems most productive for critical transcultural inquiry in the domain of paid work.

Thus we can conclude that Honneth's perspective on recognition and work entails substantial potential for immanent critique because it positions the work domain as a significant arena of recognition, and thus of subjective and social integration. To use Honneth's terminology, critique

based in the work domain has the potential ‘to reveal an entire social pathology’ (Petersen & Willig, 2002:267). However, inquiry is complicated by the fact that Honneth’s critical conceptions of work, that is, the location of norms for an immanent critique of work, have undergone considerable shifts and are still evolving (Deranty, 2012a:151; Smith, 2009:46). In earlier theorising, Honneth (1995g) locates normative content in the expression, co-operation and autonomy entailed in the activity and product of labour, while in the model presented in *The Struggle for Recognition* (1995f), he identifies norms in the esteem recognition of individual accomplishment and contribution at work. And in the more recent 2010 writing, cited earlier, Honneth adds new normative dimensions to the recognition concept of work by emphasising recognition of the subject’s contribution to the social organisation of work.

Honneth’s modifications regarding the location of the norms, or normative content, on which an immanent critique of work is to be based are important in this book’s investigation. This is because various aspects of his three critical conceptions of work inform the categories that frame the analysis of intercultural relations of recognition at work. Hence the next section will expand on each conception, before moving on to present the book’s analytical framework itself.

Honneth’s Three Conceptions for a Normative Critique of Work

In an early text published in 1980, and reproduced in later publications, Honneth (1995g) locates the norms for an immanent critique of work in the expression, co-operation and autonomy entailed in the activity and product of work. Drawing on Marx and other theorists with the specific intention of (re)establishing a critical conception of work, he targets appropriations implemented by capitalist organisations such as the use of scientific management and the rationalisation of production techniques. Honneth’s theorising is based on a Marxian craft conception of work, whereby labour is understood as a semi-autonomous, skilled and holistic process that produces real objects. Hence emancipatory critique is located in what he calls “true acts of work” that involve a worker’s embodied knowledge, skills and self-direction, as well as the ability to structure and

regulate “his own activity on his own initiative” beyond attempts by management to appropriate them (pp. 46–47). With work thus regarded as an organic and unified activity, “autonomously planned and carried out by the working subject” (p. 22), Honneth identifies meaningful expression, co-operation and autonomy as key normative dimensions of work and the concept of recognition does not yet appear explicitly. However, Honneth has come to reject this early model as being of little relevance in the contemporary work world of service delivery. He considers that a rational basis for immanent normative criticism of the existing conditions of work, beyond feelings of dissatisfaction and alienation, cannot be established with universal validity (Deranty, 2012a:154–158; Honneth, 2010:225–229; Smith, 2012b:193–200/203; Smith & Deranty, 2012b:20–21).

Therefore, Honneth moves away from the activity and product of work as a normative frame and instead connects recognition and work through the principle of achievement, as set out in his well-known 1992/1995 formulation of recognition theory. From this theoretical perspective, the domain of paid work is critical in the social valuation of individual achievement, that is, the abilities, accomplishments and contributions that come into consideration in the third recognition sphere of esteem. Honneth thus locates normative content and therefore normative surplus in the social esteem recognition that working subjects are due for work-related achievement, as well as for the contribution they make to the social commons through their labour. In other words, work now matters inasmuch as, being a major type of social contribution, it is a major vector for building self-esteem. As we know, self-esteem is one of the three key dimensions of the self-relations that are at stake in the development of self-realisation and autonomous agency, and one that requires sustained affirmation (Honneth, 2012e:207). The critical point here is that the reference system, or general value horizon, for deciding the measure of esteem to be allocated to different work accomplishments is dominated by the prevailing social groups' interpretations and may be contested by marginalised groups. This is the concept of contested value horizon as it has been described in Chapter [Two](#). In this regard, Honneth acknowledges that work has been defined in different ways in various historical eras. Therefore, he argues, the principle of achievement through

work will need to change in the future to take account of new developments. Today for instance, there is a push for the recognition of unpaid domestic work and voluntary care, and a relative devaluing of traditional forms of work. There are also instrumental types of recognition at work today that differ markedly from, and can indeed directly oppose, the demands of recognition based on moral expectations. Some examples are neo-liberal practices that reconstitute subjectivity and self-realisation as commodities (Honneth, 2012b:157–164) and the recognition of financial success purely acquired through stock market speculation and luck rather than accomplishment (Honneth, 1995f:121–130; Petersen & Willig, 2002:267/274; Smith, 2012b:200–204).

However, in his 2010 ‘redefinition of work and recognition’, Honneth specifically identifies normative content in recognition of the contribution that subjects make to the social exchange of labour, as a means of addressing what he sees as weaknesses in the achievement principle. Smith (2012b:203–204) reads the shift to this latest exchange model as Honneth’s attempt to address what he perceives as his failure to establish a rational basis for normative criticism, not just in the first activity of work model but also in the second achievement model. In other words, Honneth’s reasoning is similar to his argument for rejecting the work activity concept, in that he considers esteem recognition of achievement a weak way of establishing universal validity. Drawing on Hegel and Durkheim, he now seeks to strengthen the recognition model by specifically locating its ethical basis and normative content in the economic system of production and consumption, where subjects are dependent upon one another’s contributions for the maintenance of their livelihoods. Under this latest conception, then, normativity arises from the fact that, in the modern capitalist meritocracy, subjects mutually sustain one another by contributing to the exchange of goods and services. Esteem recognition is therefore due to the social subject inasmuch as s/he contributes to the integration and reproduction of society through participation in the social organisation of work, particularly but not exclusively, paid work. In this third model, the normative expectations that engender subjects’ participation in labour markets are the right to a wage able to support reasonable economic independence, the right to contribute to the common good, and the right to meaningful work in the sense

that a minimal level of self-direction and skill are involved in its execution. Honneth thus poses norms in terms of the external relationship between the subject and her/his social environment through productive contribution, rather than in terms of the internal relationship between the worker and her/his productive task (Deranty, 2012a:175–178; Honneth, 2010:227–237; Smith, 2012b:203–206).

There are thus three stages in Honneth's critical conceptions of work, from the first but now abandoned understanding of work as the performance of autonomous, expressive, co-operative activity from a subjective viewpoint, to work as achievement worthy of social esteem, to work as a recognised contribution to the mutual exchange of goods and services in society. In recent years, however, recognition and work specialists have challenged Honneth's rejection of his first critical model. In their attempts to re-establish the original normative significance of work in the very act and product of working, these theorists (Deranty, 2007, 2009b, 2010c, 2012a; Renault, 2012; Smith, 2012b; Smith & Deranty, 2012a) draw on other resources, particularly psychodynamics of work theorising offered by Christophe Dejours (2012). Dejours proposes that the act of work carries essential ontological significance and psychological dimensions for the working subject in terms of the expression of self and life, as well as for the possibilities of self-fulfilment and mental well-being through the social recognition of the activity and product of work (Dejours, 2007:73; Dejours, 2014:123–125; Smith, 2012b:193). Specifically, Dejours delineates three powers associated with the act of working, which Molinier (2012:251, citing Dejours, 1998) names 'enabling the subject to form itself, applying intelligence objectively and transforming the world'. From this perspective work can be understood, as Honneth first conceived of it, as a creative and transformative work of the worker upon herself or himself, a labour that deepens meaningfulness, enriches subjectivity and facilitates self-realisation.

Under these formulations, work activity itself contains its own internal norms. The norms of self-expression, co-operation and autonomy are located in the experience, quality and product of work (Deranty, 2007:158; Renault, 2012:141–149; Smith & Deranty, 2012a:58–59). It is proposed that these aspects, when recognised, entail just as strong a normative dimension as social valuation of achievement (second critical

conception) and esteem recognition of contribution through market-mediated exchange (third critical conception). Indeed, some argue that these two later normative conceptions may prove insufficient because they reduce the content and scope of norms that can be used for a critique of work, as well as diluting the social and political force of “the morally charged experience of working people themselves” (Smith & Deranty, 2012b:22). Specifically, Deranty (2012a:152–153) suggests that the normative and critical force of work, in terms of its expressive and co-operative aspects, can be retained by replacing Honneth’s earlier quasi-anthropological characterisation with a psychological and phenomenological understanding. This position, he argues, provides greater “ethical weight” and increased possibilities for critique and political contestation.

As we know, Honneth’s view is that individual and social integration are particularly achieved through esteem recognition at and around work, and he has been intent upon establishing conceptions of work that can be used for normative critique. This section has outlined the three critical conceptions first presented by Honneth, and further developed by recognition and work scholars drawing particularly on the work of Dejours. Such an outline has been necessary because key aspects of these critical models are utilised in the framework devised to analyse research findings in relation to intercultural (mis)recognition at work. This analytical framework is presented below in the final section of this short bridging chapter.

The Analytical Framework

A three-part structure, emerging from the iterative research process described in the previous chapter, has been developed to frame the book’s analysis of intercultural (mis)recognition in the workplace. This framework, while borrowing inspiration from Smith’s and Deranty’s location of normative critique in ‘what one is at work’ and ‘what one does at work’ (Smith & Deranty, 2012a:54–55), stands separate from that delineation. The three analytical categories in this book’s framework, ‘who one is at work’, ‘what one does for work’ and ‘how one practises at work’, reconstruct and utilise interwoven aspects of Honneth’s three conceptions for

a normative critique of work, as they have been described in the preceding section. Thus the critical analysis of intercultural (mis)recognition at work encompasses esteem recognition in terms of the norms of achievement, contribution and performance. Following is a brief overview of the three analytical categories, with a fuller account of each category offered at the beginning of its corresponding empirical chapter in Part Two of the book.

The first analytical category structuring the research findings, the subject of Chapter [Five](#), encompasses intercultural (mis)recognition regarding ‘who one is at work’ specially related to ethno-racial identification. Work experience is thus conceived of as a specific social sphere in which recognition and misrecognition of ‘who one is’ occurs. When workers are perceived, or perceive themselves, as members of minority ethnic and racial groups, the attribute of who one is *visibly* complicates relations of recognition. In this case, Pacific Island workers participating in this research report a type of cross-cultural misrecognition specifically related to their ethno-racial identity as it transforms their work identity. Utilising a reconstruction of Honneth’s second and third critical conceptions of work, Chapter [Five](#) anchors its critical analysis in esteem recognition of achievement and contribution, as these norms come into contact with problems related to ethno-racial identification at work.

The second analytical category ordering the empirical findings, the subject of Chapter [Six](#), comprises intercultural (mis)recognition implicit in ‘what one does for work’ as it pertains to the status of a worker’s occupation and the status of that occupation’s duties and expectations. Work experience is thus conceived of as a specific social sphere in which recognition and misrecognition of ‘what one does’ occurs. For Pacific Island workers participating in this research, job market participation and the work tasks it involves generates a complex blend of recognition and misrecognition. However, misrecognition is the more pronounced effect, proving to be a significant source of social devaluation and alienation as an entrenched reality of everyday life. Drawing on Honneth’s second and third critical conceptions of work, and indeed his first critical conception as it has been developed by recognition and work theorists, Chapter [Six](#) anchors its critical analysis in esteem recognition of achievement, contribution including reasonable pay, and performance including the expres-

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sive, autonomous, co-operative aspects of working activity, as these norms are substantiated in occupational identities.

The third analytical category structuring the research findings, the subject of Chapter [Seven](#), incorporates intercultural (mis)recognition regarding 'how one practises at work' as it relates to the concrete practices of multicultural workplaces. Work experience and indeed the working activity itself are thus conceived of as a specific social sphere in which recognition and misrecognition of 'how one practises' occurs. In this regard, empirical fieldwork revealed interwoven recognition and misrecognition narratives arising from contested perspectives on cross-cultural practice, as well as from the culturally differentiated adaptations made by Pacifica workers to bridge functional and cultural disparities between the work organisation's prescriptive procedures and their practical implementation. Chapter [Seven](#) draws on the critical conception of the recognition of the performance and product of working activity as engendering modes of self-transformation, as well as on Honneth's later two formulations of the recognition and work nexus. It thus anchors its critical analysis in esteem recognition of achievement, contribution including fair pay, and especially performance including the expressive, autonomous, co-operative aspects of working activity, as these norms inform and are in turn modelled by concrete work practices.

Drawing from reconstructions of Honneth's conceptions for a critique of paid work, these three categories constitute the framework for the empirical chapters that are to follow in Part Two of the book. Overall, critical analysis is anchored in normative understandings of work as recognised autonomous, expressive, co-operative performance from a subjective point of view, as achievement worthy of social esteem, and as recognition worthy contribution to the mutual exchange of goods and services. Each of these three categories, in different ways, holds the promise of descriptive depth and explanatory force for the analysis of intercultural (mis)recognition uncovered during research fieldwork amongst Australia's Pacific Island workers. Although these categories have been delineated for analytical purposes, of course the relations of recognition that they encompass are, in practice, inter-related in complex ways. From the perspective of the research participants, especially, cross-cultural relations of recognition are experienced in everyday work life as multidimen-

sional and inseparable. To borrow from Smith and Deranty (2012a:54) once more, expectations of recognition regarding who one is, what one does and how one practises in paid work contexts “are interwoven into the fabric of everyday life”.

This short bridging chapter has brought together the key themes of work, esteem recognition and multiculturalism, to establish a framework via which the project’s research findings will be critically analysed. As such, it represents the last of the theoretical chapters of the book. We now move on to Part Two, where the three empirical chapters will introduce Pacific Islanders going about their ordinary working lives in terms of who they are, what they do and how they practise in intercultural contexts.

Part Two

The Empirical Section

Chapter Five

Everyday Intercultural (Mis)Recognition and 'Who One Is At Work'

This chapter, and the two following chapters that constitute Part Two, represent the empirical heart of this book. It is here that we meet real people, specifically Pacific Islanders encountered during research, and hear from them regarding their experiences of intercultural recognition and misrecognition at work. This chapter addresses cross-cultural (mis) recognition at work as it is shaped by the identification of 'who one is', specifically 'who one is racially and ethnically'. In particular, it examines marginalisation based on negative assessment of Pacifica workers' ethnic and racial identities, and its significations in specific instances, to contribute a critique of ethno-racial misrecognition in intercultural workplace relations. Elaborated below, the critical analysis of 'who one is at work' is anchored in Honneth's second and third critical conceptions, and thus esteem recognition in relation to the norms of achievement and contribution in the domain of paid employment.

The chapter is structured in two sections. The first section presents a reconstruction of Honneth's second and third normative models of work as the means whereby the chapter will anchor its critical analysis of 'who one is racially and ethnically at work'. The second section of the chapter presents samples of ethno-racial misrecognition at work as they emerged organically during the fieldwork process. It offers analysis of some of the

ways in which these experiences disrupt the reception of esteem recognition regarding the norms of achievement and contribution in the realm of employment, as well as some of the responses and restorative strategies utilised by the workers affected.

A Honneth-Based Critique of Intercultural (Mis)Recognition Regarding ‘Who One Is At Work’

In the foreword to a publication on recognition and work, John Rundell (2012:vii) writes, “If work is one of the social bonds through which people’s lives can be made meaningful in the modern world, then the new neo-liberal environment can disrupt, damage, or destroy these bonds and the experiences of personal and collective recognition”. This sentiment could equally apply to the experience of ethno-racial misrecognition at work. It seems almost self-evident to argue that modes of ethno-racial marginalisation violate workers’ moral expectations of recognition and damage the preconditions of autonomous agency. Nevertheless, despite the strong intuitive nature of the claim, it is necessary to elaborate the basis on which it relies. A critique located in the concept of ‘who one is at work’ is not specifically included in Honneth’s theorising of recognition in and through work. However, this analytical category can be constructed by drawing resources from Honneth’s second and third models for work-related critique, as they were outlined in Chapter [Four](#). These two conceptions identify the social esteem recognition of individual achievement at work and the public recognition of contribution to the social exchange of goods and services as bearing crucial consequences for the possibilities of self-esteem, and thus self-realisation and autonomy, of worker subjects.

We begin with Honneth’s second critical conception of work, centred as it is on disruptions to the norm of achievement. Located within the cultural sphere of solidarity in the mature theory of recognition (Honneth, 1995f), the achievement principle can be utilised to critique recognition relations involving ethno-racial marginalisation at work. This is because racist denigration is dehumanising. It reduces its recipients, at least in the

moments of encounter, to racial or ethnic categories rather than acknowledging them fully as human working subjects deserving of just social esteem for the achievements of the paid work in which they have engaged. In foregrounding a negative perception of visible racial and ethnic differences, the reductive view has the paradoxical effect of rendering the subject worker partially 'invisible'. It thereby has the potential to diminish the worker's possibilities of receiving esteem recognition for specific accomplishments and contributions through paid employment, or indeed for specific individual traits and expertise directly linked to those achievements and contributions. This matters because, in Honneth's socio-cultural sphere and more particularly in the domain of paid employment, individuals depend upon esteem recognition from other social beings to advance a sense of valuation of their own abilities and achievements, and thus develop and maintain self-esteem, self-realisation and autonomy.

Meanwhile, Honneth's third critical conception for a normative critique of work is located in the organised productive process. Here, the normativity located in the system of market-mediated exchange can be utilised to critically assess intercultural relations of recognition involving racial or ethnic denigration at work. Honneth (2010:230) argues that the division of labour obliges subjects to mutually recognise one another "as private autonomous beings that act for each other and thereby sustain their livelihood through the contribution of their labour to society". Furthermore, Smith (2012b:204) points out that Honneth locates the market's moral basis in "the reciprocity of the *obligation* to work for one's living by satisfying others' needs on the one hand, and the *opportunity* to do reasonably paid work which involves a minimal level of self-directed skilful activity on the other", that is, in the norms of contribution, reasonable pay and meaningful work. Ethno-racial misrecognition has the capacity to disrupt two of these norms, specifically contribution and meaningful work, at an interpersonal level. The aiming of racist disparagement at a subject willing to provide socially beneficial services through work has the potential to erode the legitimacy of mutual obligation and contribution, that sense of 'acting for each other'. It also holds the potential to unsettle any sense of achievement and meaningfulness that the 'ethnicised' or 'racialised' subject attaches to her or his contribution to the social commons through work. This is not meaningfulness in the

sense of self-direction and skill, but in the sense of satisfying the obligation one owes others through the exchange of labour. A system of reciprocal labour exchange, in which exist relations of recognition that lead to ethno-racial misrecognition, is not a system in which 'all subjects mutually recognise one another as private and contributing autonomous beings'.

Ethno-racial denigration manifests in complex forms that can be explored from many different perspectives. However, the chapter's analysis of (mis)recognition regarding 'who one is racially and ethnically at work' is specifically anchored in Honneth's second and third critical conceptions of work as they have been construed in this section. Critical analysis is thus tied to esteem recognition of achievement and contribution at work, and the sense of meaningfulness that may flow from these resources. The analysis is interested in the ways in which ethno-racial misrecognition disrupts these norms of work and thus potentially erodes the possibilities of individual self-esteem, self-fulfilment, autonomy and well-being, as well as the social bonds through which recognition at work is attributed.

Ethno-Racial Misrecognition and the Norms of Paid Work

The phenomenon of ethno-racial misrecognition in employment contexts emerged organically, and with significant resonance, during the fieldwork stage of research. Pacific Island workers revealed a commonly held understanding that such misrecognition was centrally tied to identification of 'who they were perceived to be visibly, racially, ethnically, culturally' at work. Disturbingly, many related and reflected upon compelling experiences of denigration of ethnic and racial identity in relations with clients and colleagues. We will return to these Pacifica workers below, but first some theoretical parameters need to be set regarding the understanding of ethnic and racial identity used in this chapter's analysis.

Identity, or the identification of 'who one is at work', refers to an individual's pre-given attributes such as bodily appearance, physical and emotional needs, distinctive beliefs, sense of ethnic and racial belonging,

cultural orientations and expectations of autonomous responsibility (Smith & Deranty, 2012a:54). It is these attributes that subjects embody and in that sense ‘bring with them to work’, in the expectation that their unique features will be respected by employers, managers, colleagues and clients. Ethnic and racial identity, specifically, is understood here, in line with influential scholars in the field, as a dialectical process that includes identification imposed by outsiders and a group sense of belonging and commitment variously and contingently embraced by individual members of the collective (Ahmad, 1995:14–18; Brah, 2005:84; Noble et al., 1999:29–31; Wimmer, 2008:980).

Relatedly, the ontological status of racial, ethnic and cultural categories was addressed in the methodology section of Chapter [Three](#), but it is worth revisiting the topic briefly here given this chapter’s specific emphasis on denigration linked to ethno-racial identity. The ‘social fact’ of ethno-racial misrecognition at work, which became immediately prominent during the project’s fieldwork, demonstrates that the socially constructed categories of race, ethnicity and culture continue to play, as Omi and Winant (2002:124) put it “a fundamental role in structuring and representing the social world”. Racialisation is normalised in psychosocial identity formation and deeply sedimented in social relations (Dalal, 2002:26/198; Essed, 2004:125; Miles & Brown, 2003; Phoenix, 2005:103; Puwar, 2004:21). As Collins et al. (2000:17) note, “while there are no ‘races’ of people as such ... individuals and institutions act *as if there were races*”.

However, the term ‘ethno-racial’ used in this analysis does not imply a monolithic or essentialist notion of ethno-racial identity. As many scholars substantiate, ethnic and racial differences represent a dynamic process of formation that is subject to evolving political, economic and cultural circumstances (Banton, 2005:52–54; Brah, 1996:95/241; Dalal, 2002:9–31; Lamont, 1999b:ix–xx; Lamont, 2000:3–5; Nayak, 2005:141/158; Nederveen Pieterse, 2004:27; Phoenix, 2005:103). At the everyday level, racialised boundaries work through what Bonilla-Silva (2012:173) names a “racial grammar”, by which is meant a process that normalises the standards of racial (White) dominance through the taken-for-granted structuring of subjective vision, cognition and feeling in the spaces and moments of human encounter. As this chapter’s analysis will

highlight, ethno-racial border construction involves complex psychological processes (Cohen, 2002; Dalal, 2002), habituated senses and relational nuance (Swanton, 2010; Wise, 2010; Wise & Chapman, 2005; Wise & Velayutham, 2009b), as well as the cultural resources, structural position and contingent circumstances of the subjects involved (Brah, 2005:84; Lamont, 2000:7/241–245).

Let us now hear from four Pacifica workers, some of whom will be encountered again in following chapters. In narrative excerpts drawn from fieldwork, these research participants relate work experiences that, from their perspectives, involve types of negative evaluation of ethno-racial identity. They reveal that such denigration comes in varying modes and degrees of intensity, ranging from the 'monolithic racism of yore to the messy racial hegemony of contemporary times' (Omi & Winant, 2002:139). The critique therefore seeks out their phenomenological experiences of ethno-racial misrecognition, delineates the different modes (overt insult, stereotyping, territorial domination, border closure) of such deprecation in their everyday workplaces, and connects these modes to broader structural patterns and systems of domination and subordination. It explores the ways in which ethno-racial misrecognition potentially corrodes the norms of achievement, contribution and meaningfulness, and thus the preconditions of self-realisation and autonomy, for workers from a minority ethnic group in Australia. The critical analysis also identifies some of the recipients' responses to negative ethno-racial identification and the restorative strategies that they employ. It is important to note that the first of the four sections below is more substantive than the subsequent three. This is because the first section establishes multilevel analysis in-depth, which is then understood as applicable in the following sections. However, the sections that follow this first one do offer additional insights regarding the experience of, and restorative response to, ethno-racial misrecognition at work.

The overall intention is to convey something of the experience of these workers living, to some extent at least, the force of societal structures related to racial and ethnic boundaries, as well as the effects and responses in terms of the norms of paid work. Given the diverse nature of habituated dispositions and subjective responses, this circumstance does pose the pertinent question, discussed in Chapters [Two](#) and [Three](#), regarding

the weighting to give to subjects' self-assessments of offences (McBride & Seglow, 2009:9; Smith & Deranty, 2012a:62). However, the samples of ethno-racial misrecognition at work, that are presented below, have both a moral and a psychological edge that appear deeply significant to their recipients, and that is the point.

Maria: 'Black Bitch, Go Back To Where You Came From'

Maria is a woman of Polynesian ancestry who, like many of the research participants, came to Australia with her husband and children after initial migration to Aotearoa New Zealand. Employed as a care worker in an aged care facility, she professes to enjoy her job "though there is a darker side". The ellipses in the interview excerpt indicate breaks where Maria moves her narration into other everyday life domains and then returns to the topic of paid employment, a topic that appears to be of intense interest to her.

Mmmm, I get it at work. You know, these Aussie elderlies. They're all right most of the time. But then you either get called a Black bitch or, you know, go back to where you came from. I'll look at them and think, excuse me you! Who do you think you're talking to? Who is doing your care? You know, your own people won't even look after you, help clean you up. That's why they put you in a nursing home. ... I mean at work, you don't want to be so nasty to them but sometimes you gotta hit them with it. Because, in our culture, we do not put our elders in a nursing home. We take care of our own 'til, whatever, God decides to take them, they go. ... Yep, yep, so what can you do? I mean you get used to it, yep. You just shrug it off and just do your work. I mean to be called a Black bitch, go back to where you come from. ... I mean I'm used to it, but I wanted to say to this old man (elderly client) who's at work, listen here you! You're Aussie, and ok I'm Black. This Black person here's the one that wipes your backside. And your Aussies, they don't do it for you. So don't you complain.

Maria's 'darker side of employment' arrives powerfully in the misrecognition frame, blatant old-fashioned racism experienced in the mundane flow of everyday work life. A Pacific Island migrant, Maria locates 'these Aussie elderlies' within the dominant White Anglo-Celtic group in Australia. This location positions antipathy directed towards her 'Black working body' as originating in the racialised structures and cultural rep-

ertoires of European colonialism, which extend into the post-colonial era. Despite continued struggles against marginalisation and material inequality, especially in the post-war period, ethno-racial disparity continues to hold social and political resonance in contemporary times (Essed, 1991; Fanon, 1986; Goldberg & Solomos, 2002; Mills, 1998:53; Nederveen Pieterse, 2007:14–16/99; Omi & Winant, 2002:139; Phoenix, 2005:103; Young, 2001). Maria's testimony, and those of the other Pacific Islanders to follow, highlights what Amin (2010:13) calls 'the remainders of this racial legacy', the ingrained habit of "reading human difference and worth in racial terms". These remainders frame complex boundary terrains between groups, them and us, Brown and White, Pacific Islander and Palagi (White European) in the domain of paid work (Collins, 1996; Collins et al., 2000; Essed, 2002, 2004; Lamont, 1999a, 2000:49; Lamont & Molnár, 2002), in migrant labour relations (Lamont, 2000; Miles, 1982; Miles & Brown, 2003) and in the Australian labour market (Collins, 1996; Collins et al., 2000:20; Loomis, 1990).

Ethno-Racial Misrecognition at Work: Eroding a Sense of Achievement, Contribution and Meaningfulness

There is little doubt that work is important to Maria. During the conversation, she describes the sense of fulfilment and worth that she derives from working to help others, 'the elderlies at work, young people who need a motherly eye, the neighbours, the local community'. In particular, as well as her paid aged care work, she enacts a voluntary pastoral care role for at-risk Pacific Island youth in her neighbourhood. It is also clear that Maria considers herself morally wronged through racial disrespect at work. How can we understand her reactions and responses in terms of a struggle to restore the normative claims of work? Maria was originally encountered through one of her adult children who had agreed to a field-work interview. Her passionate desire to relate her work experiences, as a Pacific Islander in Australia, required rescheduling of that planned interview. This desire and Maria's animated expression seem to point to a disruption of, and struggle for, esteem recognition regarding her accomplishments and contribution, as well as her sense of fulfilment through work.

The experience of the injuries of ethno-racial misrecognition regarding these norms of work is multilayered. One layer highlights a strong sense of injustice regarding the erosion of the norm of achievement, through the reduction of the migrant worker to 'racial other'. Maria's angry response to the 'Black bitch' insult is palatable, perhaps because, in foregrounding visible difference, the insult has an objectifying effect. The view of Maria as a fully human worker, deserving of social esteem, is obscured. As discussed earlier, such a reduction has the paradoxical effect of rendering the worker partially invisible because it erodes sight of that employee's unique traits and accomplishments. The sense of invisibility comes to the fore in Maria's claim for recognition of effort and contribution, which she delivers in no uncertain terms: "I'll look at them and think, excuse me you! Who do you think you're talking to? Who is doing your care? ... Listen here you". In reality, of course, it is to the researcher and indeed to herself that she directs this claim for recognition of achievement in aged care work.

A related second layer points in the direction of righteous indignation regarding disruption to the norms of contribution and meaningful work. As noted above, in this exchange we can see 'the remainders of race', the post-colonial Black body assigned the invidious work, under-paid and largely under-valued by the wider community for whose dependents she cares. This aged care worker barely contains her outrage at what she perceives to be the blatant unfairness of having 'her Black body insulted as it cleans up his White body in the absence of his White relatives, while her Brown relatives are at home cleaning up their own'. Elderly care work, with the requirement to engage in discomforting bodily procedures, is an essential service. Vilification directed at a worker providing such socially beneficial services disrupts the legitimacy of mutual contribution to the social division of work. It also potentially unsettles the sense of self-respect and meaningfulness that the worker may attach to her means of satisfying 'the obligation one owes others through labour exchange'. The disruption to these norms, as far as Maria is concerned, is perhaps best captured in this expression: "I wanted to say to this old man who's at work, listen here you! You're Aussie, and ok I'm Black. This Black person here's the one that wipes your backside. And your Aussies, they don't do it for you. So don't you complain".

5 Everyday Intercultural (Mis)Recognition and 'Who One Is At Work'

In these modes of care work, care as care, care as gainful employment and care as discomforting work but owed to elders, Maria gets no full recognition. In a later reflection, she introduces the term 'disrespect' to convey something of the hurt and outrage that accompany the experience of diminishment of her efforts at work. In the following excerpt, Maria links ethno-racial denigration that she encounters in the aged care sector with the race-typing of its workforce. The issue of occupational race-typing in care work, and in other employment sectors in which Pacifica workers are clustered, is specifically addressed in the next chapter.

Yep, well, it's like who you are or what you do (for work). It's disrespectful. Yep, there's no respect for this (aged care) work, no respect for us (Pacific Islanders) doin' it. No, no respect for who you are. ... You know, I been told you PIs (Pacific Islanders) do this (aged care work) 'cause you're no good at anything else. Not as though you need any qualifications. ... I mean I like my work. I want to help the elderlies. But yep, so what can you do?

Maria also has more to say on the matter of 'being Black'. Her reflection below highlights the way in which the stark historical terms 'Black' and 'White' continue as the common colour codes in racialised processes, despite the complexity of racial, ethnic and cultural differentiation (Dalal, 2002:224–225).

I mean I'm not even Black (laughs). I'm Brown. ... But yep, makes you think, well, be ashamed to be who you are. I mean you could be (ashamed). Mmmm, I mean I wasn't (ashamed to be Brown) til I came to New Zealand and now working here (in Australia). But what can you do? ... But then, now I say to the kids, they're (the racists) ignorant. Just ignore them. Be proud of who you are. You have plenty to give. Yep, you gotta respect yourself 'cause others won't. But it's a struggle, you know, (to) hold your head up.

The two excerpts above reveal complex psychological layers in the face of ethno-racial disrespect at work. For example, they poignantly illustrate the way in which feelings of pride in accomplishment and contribution, and a sense of meaningful fulfilment gained through work, co-exist precariously with the experience of shame and disempowerment. In this

regard, Honneth (1995c:257) proposes that when recognition in the form of social approval, particularly at work, fails “to arise at any level of development, it opens up, as it were, a psychological gap within the personality, which seeks expression through the negative emotional reactions of shame or anger, offence or contempt”. Utilising Maria’s transcripts, the following portion of the analysis orients towards the ‘psychological gaps’ of racialised misrecognition at work.

A consensus exists in the literature that social denigration, including racist denigration, is emotionally and psychologically injurious (Miller & Schamess, 2000:52–60; Parker & Aggleton, 2003:18; Williams et al., 2008:35). The sense of shame to which Maria refers in her narration above can be understood in terms of its link to racialised self-negation as an internalised cumulative sense of inferiority, inadequacy and disempowerment (Collins, 2000:vi; Kulick & Klein, 2003:225; Lorde, 1984:174; Petherbridge, 2011a:18; Tummala-Narra, 2011:437; Yuval-Davis, 1994:179). Racialised self-negation involves a complex psychodynamic process of ‘becoming other to self’, that is, a divided self-identity, through objectification and the absorption of the dominant culture in race divided societies (Dalal, 2002:95, drawing on Fanon, 1986). Thus recipients of racial denigration may acquiesce to such subjugation because from one side of the psychic divide they are so psychologically orientated (Cohen, 2002:185–187, drawing on Fanon, 1986; Lengermann & Niebrugge, 2013:215–216). Although nuanced and variable within and between groups, a subjugated identity position can engender forms of mind and body stress that affect health and well-being.

This analysis understands Maria’s sense of racialised shame as at least partially originating in a subjugated identity position, even as that position is in flux and contested (Murji & Solomos, 2005:7). Internal subjugation is often deeply sedimented in the body (Dalal, 2002:124–126) and where race and gender intersect, disintegrative impacts may be more pronounced and complex. In this regard, Black feminist theorists argue that internalised subjugation progressively embeds in the body and the psyche and powerfully influences the way in which coloured women perceive themselves. They maintain that ‘carrying racial shame within’ can lead to an ambivalent acceptance of exclusion and dependency, negatively oriented self-relations and a sense of limited autonomy on the part

of Black women (Collins, 2000:47/273–287; Hooks, 2000:xi–xii; Kim, 2001:101/106; Lengermann & Niebrugge, 2013; Lorde, 1984; Sheppard, 2006:125; Tummala-Narra, 2011:429/443; Wing, 2002; Yamoto, 1998:91). Some of these scholars emphasise the negative effects of this phenomenon as mattering particularly in the domain of work (Collins, 2000:45–67; Hooks, 2000:96–107). Indeed, the repression of the experience of subjugation makes for a mostly unconscious psychic dissonance that can impede or erode the norms of work in hard to define and even harder to change ways. For example, an uneasy sense of ambivalence, disillusionment and what might be termed habitual forbearance is detectable in Maria's testimony. Interwoven into her sentiments of empowerment through the stance of ignoring disrespect at work, a topic to be discussed in the next section, there appears a palatable feeling of disempowerment. This sense of defeat is captured in particular phrases repeated by Maria several times during the conversation: "I mean you get used to it. So what can you do? Just shrug it off and do your work. It's a struggle (to) hold your head up".

Maria's 'concentration on the work task' as a means of coping with a sense of disempowerment is a timely reminder of the crucial importance of the work sphere for esteem recognition. As Honneth (1995a:xviii) argues, "When individual identity formation also depends upon the social esteem which one's own work enjoys within one's society, then the concept of work simply cannot be so constructed that it categorically overlooks this psychic connection". This connection positions the domain of employment as a crucial sphere for the development of identity, self-esteem and self-realisation, and constructs disrespect at work as unjust and ultimately untenable. In terms of the effects of racial insult on the norms of work, aspects of Maria's narrative suggest gradual erosion rather than abrupt disruption. The erosive quality is partly discernible in the ambiguity of work in this scenario. Maria's paid position is something that can, should and does bring this worker pride, but it is also something in which she 'buries her head' when experiencing and dealing with the denial of recognition of her accomplishments and contributions: "Just shrug it off and just do your work".

Furthermore, a sense of daily familiarity emerges, conveyed originally in Maria's unremarkable style of narration of the 'Black bitch' story.

Sitting at her kitchen table drinking a mug of tea and eating the ubiquitous cream bun, she describes a shocking experience of denigration at work, and also denigration of her aged care work, in relatively mundane terms. “Oh, I’m used to it”, she says dismissively, claiming to have been the subject of disrespect in her professional role many times. The familiarity theme repeats during the fieldwork process and is discernible in the experiences of ethno-racial disrespect at work presented in the following sections. It harks back to Essed’s early research with Black women, whereby racism is ‘made ordinary’ for them (Essed, 1991). The sense of the familiar, emerging through taken-for-granted exclusionary experiences in daily working relations, seems to dull the edges of racial insult. But while Maria insists on the routine nature of disrespect at work, she also insists on a repetitive ‘going over’ of the topic during the interview and afterwards. It is as though she carries the nagging disturbances of ethno-racial misrecognition at work in her psyche. This phenomenon supports Honneth’s intuition regarding the central importance of social esteem, particularly regarding work-related achievement and contribution, for the development of forms of identity, self-esteem and autonomous agency.

Restoring a Sense of Achievement, Contribution and Meaningfulness at Work

The previous section analysed some of the multilayered ways in which ethno-racial misrecognition potentially disrupts the sense of achievement, contribution and fulfilment that is normative in paid work. But while unequal power relations may be the means whereby modes of racial disrespect erode the worth and dignity one gains from one’s work, power is also the means by which such injustice is contested (Brah, 1996:242–243). Indeed, in Honneth’s framework, shame and disempowerment experienced at the individual level have the potential to become, if co-ordinated at the collective level, the psychological impetus for a recognition struggle (Kulick & Klein, 2003:225). This section analyses Maria as an individual instrument of empowerment at least, enacting strategies to rehabilitate the norms of work eroded for her by forms of denigration. Of course, the existence of rehabilitative agency does raise the question as to the extent to which adap-

tive strategies undermine the potential for collective action to challenge the existing recognition order.

In her reflections, at least, Maria contests the erosion of her sense of achievement and contribution through work and displays the desire to assert agency. Essed (1991:171, citing Giddens, 1979) maintains that struggles against everyday racism can be understood in terms of a transformative capacity, exemplified in action as a routine phenomenon. Indeed, empowerment can be understood as embodied actions that convey a psychological sense of personal control and a motivation towards influencing social relations (Christiansen & Townsend, 2010:342; Rapaport 1999:121). Empowering and transforming strategies to restore the positive aspects of work are discernible in Maria's narration, the most obvious being the expression of indignant rage and oppositional anger.

In its first flowering, Maria's expression is muted but as she warms up to the affective energy of her responses, a fuller expression of indignant rage and oppositional anger emerges. Black feminists describe indignant rage and oppositional anger as potentially healthy responses to racism, serving to resist denigration, decolonise the mind, inspire courageous behaviour and achieve self-determination (Collins, 1998; Hooks, 1995:21; Kim, 2001:100; Lorde, 1984:124–133; Tummala-Narra, 2011). Fleming et al. (2012:402/408) note that righteous indignation is a common response to racialised misrecognition in work settings. In Maria's mental 'ticking off' of the elderly client, "Excuse me you! Who do you think you're talking to?" we see a unique subjective expression of these empowering and transformative strategies. They can be understood as aspects of Maria's opposition to the refusal to recognise or value her efforts, an impulsive embodied means of restoring the damaged norms of work.

But the expression of righteous indignation and oppositional anger takes place during Maria's reflective retelling and not during the actual workplace interaction of which she speaks. Later in the interview, she is asked if she has ever expressed anger and indignation directly. No, Maria 'holds her tongue'. She has never actually 'been nasty to them' or 'hit them with it'. Some of that reserve may be linked to meekness or to practical considerations, the simple need to keep one's job and receive one's wages. However, noting the special vulnerability of 'these Aussie elderlies', Maria cites the aged care worker's professional rigour, compassion

and ethical duty of care as her motivation for resisting the urge to retaliate. Her reasoning speaks to the norms of work, that is, the strong sense of meaning, self-respect and satisfaction that Maria derives from her job: “I mean I like my work. I want to help the elderlies”.

Silent rage can also be a primary means of subjective empowerment, in opposition to discourses that favour confrontation or speaking out against racism in work contexts. Rodriguez (2011) argues that rage which remains unspoken is a means whereby those who have been objectified reconstitute themselves as ‘subjects to themselves’. Maria expresses righteous anger from just such an empowering inner space. Her exhortations to her adult children, ‘ignore them, be proud of who you are, we have plenty to contribute, hold your head up, respect yourself when others do not’, seem to assist her to restore a sense of accomplishment, reciprocity of contribution and meaningfulness eroded through the denial of recognition. The norm of mutual contribution is particularly important to Maria, who involves herself, and encourages her adult children to involve themselves, in voluntary pastoral care work in the local Pacifica community. This topic will be addressed more fully below.

Indeed Maria’s, “I say to the kids, they’re ignorant. Just ignore them”, represents a related restorative strategy, that of magnanimity or ‘taking the moral high ground with an ignoring silence’. An ignoring silence is understood as a strategic moral action that empowers subjects facing ethno-racial misrecognition at work, especially when the work is to care for the abuser as in this case. Fleming et al. (2012:406) note that the adoption of such a strategic silence is frequently utilised by Black male and female workers to counteract racist stigma. Indeed, their research found that silence, emotional containment and other low-key responses are deliberately used as tactics of resistance at work (Fleming et al., 2012:408–409). Such strategies involve a subtle, energy-conserving self-control and ‘management of the self’, a response to stigma first proposed by Goffman (1963b), that morally excludes and therefore deflates the power of the denigrator. In this way, where deeds prove more powerful than words at work, employees such as Maria can begin to restore, to some extent at least, that vital sense of pride, self-respect and meaning that is engendered by esteem recognition of the worker’s achievements and contributions to the social division of labour.

Of course, sometimes silence as a response to racial denigration is shaped by pessimism about improving the situation, or by social reserve and internalised norms that restrain the expression of negative affect in the intersubjective space. In this regard, Fleming et al. (2012:401) argue that one common response to everyday racist stigma at work is to forestall confrontation by “moulding one’s self-presentation so as to prevent discomfort in others”. Vera, a research participant soon to retire to her Pacific Island homeland, exemplifies this conflict avoidance approach. She explains that in her work as a teacher aide, she “said nothing” in the face of disrespect because she was embarrassed, did not wish to be rude and considered it unchristian behaviour to retaliate. The insult was noted, was felt, but “I don’t like to say in the school”. However, as well as a form of internal censorship, there is a sense of moral empowerment discernible in Vera’s communication. It points to the play of cultural repertoires in restorative responses to misrecognition, particularly cultural values that speak to a superior moral assessment (Lamont & Mizrachi, 2012:368).

In this regard, research has identified an empowerment strategy prevalent amongst Black and working-class people aimed at reclaiming worth and status by adopting cultural scripts that involve moral evaluation (Lamont, 1999b:xiii; Lamont, 2000:2–4). Ethical assessment enables those negatively affected by racial and other hierarchies at work to position themselves “above ‘people above’” (Lamont, 1999a:127). Maria’s, “Because, in our culture, we do not put our elders in a nursing home. We take care of our own ‘til, whatever, God decides to take them, they go”, draws on cultural norms regarding aged care, as well as the constitution of work itself, to make just such a moral evaluation. These cultural norms point to the contours of a value horizon conflict in a pluralist society, whereby the non-economistic, communally oriented Pacifica interpretation is in tension with the more convenience-oriented, individualistic Western worldview regarding the care of society’s vulnerable elderly people. Hence, Maria’s demarcation of the difference can be read as a direct criticism of the dominant Anglo community in Australia where, in comparison to the Pacific Islands community, the institutionalised care of elders has become the cultural norm. Her message is ‘my culture is more caring, our culture has more integrity than the Aussie

culture'. Such a moral positioning 'above the people above' appears to contain significant restorative power. Lamont (2000:6) provides an example from her research, whereby a Muslim Arab worker in France employs a comparable cultural script to draw a moral boundary between his ethno-religious group and the French mainstream: "For us Muslim Arabs, we keep our parents with us, and you (Catholic or Protestant) send them to the nursing home ... (so you can) go to the movie theatre or somewhere else".

This analysis highlights different cultural and ethical codes in a general sense, but it also highlights moral questions regarding the constitution of 'valid work' in the overall division of labour. While care of the old, the young, the vulnerable, is an essential social task that has not been historically counted as work in Western economies, Maria enrolls a cultural repertoire that defines valued social labour more broadly. In actuality, work has several dimensions, as gainful employment but also as activity in which individual skills can be demonstrated and esteemed, as unpaid activity with social rewards, and as voluntary community contribution. Furthermore, the work of unpaid care involves the gender issue, since it is mostly women who stay at home to look after the vulnerable. If gainful employment is liberating for the individual, then such women may be disadvantaged even while the society is made more caring. In addition, when a woman who has spent her life in unpaid care settings engages in care as paid employment, she may experience the work with mixed feelings (Hooks, 2000:134–135/145). Some of that ambiguity and ambivalence is discernible in Maria's narratives above, and may partly motivate her attachment to voluntary pastoral care work.

Maria's significant involvement in unofficial pastoral care is an example of work as voluntary contribution with social rewards. She takes 'under her maternal wing' at-risk Pacifica youth who come into her orbit through her adult children's social networks. She provides "these young ones" with home-cooked meals, assistance to find accommodation and transport to health appointments and job interviews, as well as advocating for community resources to address their needs. Maria maintains that, given a million dollars, she would build a centre for young people in the local neighbourhood to secure for them the kind of care that a family home should provide but "many fail to (provide) these days". Maria talks

with great passion as we drive around the locality, and it is obvious that she derives a strong sense of purpose and fulfilment from her voluntary efforts. Indeed, by engendering substantial meaning, dignity and worth in an alternative work arena, her pastoral care initiatives may have a compensatory effect regarding the injuries of ethno-racial denigration received in paid work. Work in its wider sense is thus a place where racial misrecognition is prevalent, and one in which at the same time that denial of recognition can be countered and the norms of work restored, to some extent at least.

Before concluding this section, there is one last point to be made. Maria’s “Yep, you gotta respect yourself ‘cause others won’t” highlights the potential flaw in Honneth’s theory regarding the assertion of self-recognition in the absence of recognition from others, first discussed in Chapter Two. As the case was made there, Maria is not without forms of self-respect and self-esteem because she has developed such resources from specific interactions that involved positive recognition in different life contexts, and especially in different situations at her current and former places of work. It is also the case for the other Pacifica respondents quoted in this and following chapters. This circumstance underlines the way in which the development of personal identity and self-relations, which in Honneth’s schema is dependent upon intersubjective recognition, is an infinitely complex and multidimensional process that takes place throughout an individual biography.

The testimony of aged care employee Maria contains an emotional force that expresses something of the intense negative experience of ethno-racial misrecognition in the intercultural relations of work. It begins to demonstrate the realities and dilemmas for those living with modes of racial denigration in everyday workplace exchanges, as well as the potentially corrosive effects on their sense of achievement, contribution and meaningfulness that are, based on Honneth’s critical conceptions, normative in the paid work domain. Maria’s narration is also illustrative of some of the strategies workers from minority cultural traditions may use to counteract such cross-cultural misrecognition and attempt to restore the positive norms of work. Elsie, the next participant, relates a story of racial and ethnic stereotyping that can be understood in a similar light.

Elsie: 'I'm The Stereotype, Stupid'

Elsie, a migrant woman of Polynesian origins, is well connected in her local Pacific Islands community. Employed as a Pacifica social worker in a family violence agency, Elsie describes a social practice whereby she and her Aboriginal co-worker are repeatedly singled out and questioned regarding their authorised presence in the local police vehicle parking yard.

Sometimes I feel that, you know, I'm the stereotype, stupid. It's out there, and that's another thing that always happens to me and Sue (Elsie's Aboriginal co-worker)... We work very close with the police and ... our cars are always parked in the police car yard 'cause we have permission to park there. Honestly, you know, it was only me and Sue! We were being stereotyped. We were always (being) stopped and asked what we were doing in the police car yard! Always! And it got to the point when I got really upset. One time (it was) their manager (the police station manager) who came up to me and asked what I was doing there. And there was a time when I had a couple of my (Pacific Islands) colleagues in there (in my car), and the car was stopped. We, we were driving in and they asked us, "What are you doing in here?" And he (one of my Pacific Islands colleagues) said, "That is so disgusting". He was so really disgusted, you know, because we were being treated that way as (because we are) Pacific Islanders. And so, you know, I came back and I spoke to my (work) manager. 'Cause I hadn't been able to get my head around it till then. And I said (to my work manager), "I've had enough. I'm always (being) asked why I'm in the car park and they don't seem to ask anyone else. I go to that police station all the time. They (police personnel) know we're service (social workers who work closely with the local police), but you know, they still ask why we're there".

In Elsie's view, racial bias on the part of police personnel leads to Pacific Islanders being typecast as criminally suspect in a routine work context. As with the previous analysis, the racialised relations contained in the narrative can be linked to the institutional level. Broader social hierarchies shape a range of layered but differentiating factors, such as gender, class, ethnicity, race, age, sexual orientation and (dis)ability, by which subjects delineate others' acceptability in dynamic everyday contexts. Stereotyping can be understood as an over-emphasis on such differentiation, leading to a potential sense of social illegitimacy and incompetence

for members of marginalised groups (Goffman, 1963b, 1971, 1972; Noble, 2009a:882, citing Firth, 1972). In this case ethno-racial stereotyping, as the prejudgement of legitimacy and competence based on ethnic and racial difference (Collins et al., 2000:21–22/242), explains the sense of stigmatisation captured in Elsie's words. The phenomenon points in the direction of more diffuse forms of racial hegemony (Omi & Winant, 2002:139) than the version of blatant racism in the previous section. In essence, however, the results of ethno-racial stereotyping are the same, that is, the diminishment of a subject's full transactional worthiness (Collins et al., 2000:247; Essed, 1991:158–175; Link & Phelan, 2001:382).

Racial stereotyping by the police is associated with criminal profiling practices that aim to predict some of the characteristics of an offender through an evaluation of the circumstances of a crime (Jackson & Bekerian, 1997:2; Kocsis, 2007:394; Spinney, 2010:43). Specifically, ethnic and racial analysis was introduced into criminal profiling in the 1980s to identify drug couriers (Higgins, 2008:1; Spinney, 2010), and has since often resulted in heavier police surveillance of racially identified bodies and neighbourhoods (Goldberg, 1996:198; Puwar, 2004:61; Sibley, 1998). It is thus an increasingly controversial practice, due to the inherent potential for the discrimination of already marginalised groups and the moral dilemma thus posed regarding Western principles of equal justice (Collins et al., 2000:239–243; DeLisi, 2011:461; Harris, 2010:64; Higgins, 2008:1; Lamberth, 2010:32–35; Miller, 2013:33; Rice & White, 2010:7; Risse & Zeckhauser, 2004:131–135). Although no longer officially sanctioned in many Western nations, but emerging in popular lexicon as 'driving while Black' or 'driving while Brown', police are likely to continue to base everyday crime control decisions on pragmatic experience regarding the ascribed ethnicity or race of possible offenders (Chan, 1994:189–190; Chan, 1997:225; Collins et al., 2000:10/239–243; Harris, 2010; Lamberth, 2010).

In the Australian state of New South Wales, racial profiling appears to have an officially low profile. Except for the indigenous community, corrective services and juvenile justice reports are mostly devoid of ethnicity classification (Collins et al., 2000:67/239). As a sidenote, this absence made the accessing of statistics regarding the Pacifica community difficult

in this research. But negative stereotyping and surveillance of particular ethnic groups is understood to continue in practical policing (Chan, 1992:4–32; Chan, 1994:175–181; Chan, 1996:164–166; Collins, 2007:62/72–75; Collins et al., 2000:22/90–93/242; Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales, 1994). However, in Elsie's case, the police would likely eschew any racial slight. Indeed, local police personnel reflect a range of ethnicities themselves and were observed, during fieldwork, to pursue a policy of co-operation with minority community groups in the area. Nevertheless, the entrenched habit of noting the ethno-racial characteristics of those in the vicinity of the police station and elsewhere in the community has a long institutional history. Visible bodily features mark Elsie and Sue as members of minority social groups who are significantly over-represented in Corrections, Juvenile Justice and Community Services statistics across NSW (Cain, 2005:27–29; Hodge et al., 2007:3; Sawrikar, 2009:7–9; Sydney Local Health District, 2012; Va'a, 2003:12–14). Indeed, in a 1992 study, Pacific Islanders were specifically mentioned amongst the minority groups most frequently encountered by the New South Wales police (Chan, 1992:10).

It is the link between ethno-racial stereotyping and the normative claims of work that is the specific focus of this analysis. In eroding a full transactional worthiness, ethno-racial stereotyping essentially cuts across the social esteem attributed for individual work accomplishment. In other words, as discussed above in relation to Maria, such disrespect obscures a view of Elsie as a fully human working subject deserving of esteem recognition. Given the marginalised place traditionally attributed to the Pacific Islands diaspora in Australia, this is a status that these Pacifica individuals, and others like them who appear in later sections of this chapter and in following chapters, have worked hard and against the odds to achieve. In terms of the public recognition of contribution to social services through work, racial stereotyping potentially disrupts 'their sense of acting for one another by mutually contributing their labour as a social good' (Honneth, 2010:230).

Indeed, ethno-racial stereotyping has particular negative significance for Elsie as contributing worker, given the special collegial relationship between the local police and the staff of social work agencies such as hers: "We work very close with the police. I go to that police station all the

time". Overall, fieldwork observation produced convincing evidence of a strongly co-operative working relationship between the police and Pacifica community organisations, including one to which Elsie belongs. Police liaison officers were seen to have substantial input into the meetings of these organisations and were frequently consulted regarding local issues. Indeed, a compelling confrontation involving rival gangs saw Pacifica community leaders and police officers working as a team to address serious welfare concerns, especially as they impacted Pacific Island youth.

Given this strong sense of collegial recognition and co-operation, racial stereotyping compounds damage to the norms of achievement and contribution in the workforce. Elsie claims to be genuinely appreciated and esteemed by her manager, clients and colleagues, including police colleagues, in what is challenging social work. Indeed, it is the appreciation of the positive part Elsie and her colleagues play in the management of family violence that has motivated the local police to open their vehicle park to workers at the centre. The parking yard is surrounded by a high security fence, which supplies protection to both police and family violence workers and their vehicles. But while parking in this yard, where special permission to park is granted *because* she is a valued Pacifica social worker, Elsie becomes the subject of ethno-racial stereotyping by police. The phenomenon must come across to her as a kind of galling double standard. Something of the confusion and incredulity associated with the experience is highlighted in Elsie's animated expression: "Honestly, you know, it was only me and Sue! We were being stereotyped. We were always (being) stopped and asked what we were doing in the police car yard! Always".

On a further level, workplace ethno-racial stereotyping is damaging for Elsie because work is very important, indeed central, to her life. Elsie's sense of personal achievement and contribution in paid and voluntary work capacities comes to the fore during a lengthy interview. She describes the ways in which, in her paid job, she makes contact with apprehensive Pacifica women affected by domestic violence and encourages and supports them to begin the long recovery journey, and this appears to generate, for her, a deep sense of satisfaction, meaning and self-worth. As well as this paid employment, Elsie also engages in voluntary work dedicated

to the welfare and development of the Pacifica diaspora. As a sidenote, her paid and voluntary work are strategically linked. This link shapes contestation over work practices and will be analysed in Chapter [Seven](#). The disruption to this potent experience of fulfilment in both Elsie's paid and voluntary work roles perhaps explains some of the spirited affect in her claims of and responses to ethno-racial victimisation, a feisty energy that echoes Maria's earlier expression.

Elsie's transcript undoubtedly contains restorative sentiment regarding the norms of paid work. She describes a dawning awareness of racial stereotyping over time, which perhaps demonstrates the ways in which contemporary modes of racism are more diffuse than the blatant versions of past eras (Omi & Winant, 2002:139). Subtle types of racial disrespect tend to 'sneak up' on their recipients in slippery ways. Dimly conscious of a sense of marginalisation to begin with, Elsie seems to gradually wake up to a developing pattern, "Honestly, you know, it was only me and Sue ... being stopped", which is then firmed up when a Pacifica colleague expresses outrage at the stereotyping practice. Having 'at last got her head around it', Elsie is shocked. Bolstered by incredulity and indignant anger, she then takes a non-silent but nevertheless indirect route to resistance. As with many migrants of the second generation who were encountered during research, Elsie is ambitious. She aims to achieve supervisor level, and we will meet her again in Chapter [Six](#) in this context. In choosing to report her stereotyping claims to her manager rather than directly to the police, "And I said (to my manager), "I've had enough. I'm always (being) asked why I'm in the car park and they don't seem to ask anyone else"", we can understand Elsie's approach as a strategic bureaucratic one that is less likely to damage her individual career. She later reports that her manager took action to resolve the issue with local police and as a consequence, Elsie and her Aboriginal colleague are no longer asked to account for their presence in the police vehicle yard. But Elsie gets the final word. She claims that it will take but a few changes in police personnel to re-institute what was an unofficial practice in the first place. Unaware of the previous issue, new recruits to this policing area are likely to re-enact 'the police habitus', that is, the mostly taken-for-granted orientation towards noting the visible minority group characteristics of individuals in and around the police station and, on that basis, questioning their right to be there.

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Elsie's experience of herself as 'Pacific Islands stereotype stupid' adds weight to the argument being developed in this chapter. Ethno-racial misrecognition is a significant negative experience that damages intercultural relations of recognition. In so doing, it corrodes the normative claims of work in significant ways and instigates, for some affected by it, strategies aimed at restoring the mind-sets of achievement, contribution and meaningfulness frequently generated by paid and voluntary employment. The next participant, Johan, provides an illustration of ethno-racial misrecognition in a highly diffuse form that makes the erosion of work norms associated with that formation difficult to identify.

Johan: 'Conspicuous People Of Colour'

Johan, a Polynesian pastor, relates an experience at his son's workplace that he perceives as race-related disrespect. Although he is not the worker in this scenario, the employment theme remains relevant because the experience can be read as involving ethno-racial difference as a marker of unequal rights to social and cultural territory in the workplace.

Actually, something happened just the other day at my son's workplace. He's a chef. Works at an upmarket establishment downtown. He's been there for a couple of years now and it's reasonable, not exclusive. But it's pretty flash. So, (my son says) "Come down and we'll have dinner (at this restaurant where he works)". And so we went down and there's a bar and it's typically the after-fives, all the local trendies and business people were there, mostly White people. So (there we were), me, my wife, our two boys, my daughter, her partner, my other son's partner, all people of colour. So, there's seven of us and he's, my son (who works there), is showing us around. It was very conspicuous and we kind of stuck out. There we are in a big bunch. And we're not small people on the whole (laughs). They're automatically drawn to the fact that the chef's family were people of colour. It was like the freak show kind of thing, as though we were intruders. I think my son (the chef) was embarrassed (with us being so conspicuous) but he laughed it off. It just highlighted that we were very conspicuous and I think those kinds of experiences reinforce a touch of hypersensitivity to the perception that we were being either discriminated (against) or treated differently because of our cultural background and colour.

It is possible to imagine this scene, the crowd of mostly White bar and restaurant goers gazing as ‘a big bunch of large Brown people’ are shown through the venue by the Pacific Islands chef. The meanings ascribed to intercultural encounters are complex and fluid, sometimes having to do with everyday discomfort that is then expressed through negative racial or ethnic evaluation (Wise, 2010:922). In noticing the discomfort and ambivalence of the diners, and with a certain philosophical acceptance, Johan appears to understand himself and his group as recipients of racial misrecognition but grapples with the nebulous quality of the experience. His “perception that we were being either discriminated (against) or treated differently because of our cultural background and colour” suggests that the encounter involves forms of negative affect, or at least withheld positive regard, often subtly projected by Whites towards non-Whites (Henry & Sears, 2002:254). Certainly, Johan’s narration is measured and punctuated by reflective pauses, indicating perhaps that while he trusts his inner knowing, he struggles to ‘pin down’ the actual workings of intercultural marginalisation in the scenario and come to terms with its subtleness.

Indeed, the intercultural discomfort described by Johan is often a subtle, unspoken phenomenon that involves cultural habituation. In this encounter, there is a sense of rupture of racial habituation in social space that is expressed through various affective responses, surprise, discomfort, anxiety, disapproval and fear (Noble, 2005:117–119; Wise, 2005:176; Wise, 2010:933–935). Such human experience and response take place at the level of representation and at the level of the senses, through “the very nerve fibres of the body” (Wise & Chapman, 2005:2) that, as Bourdieu (2000:138–150) insightfully points out, are always culturally habituated.

As with the two previous narratives, the sense of rupture in Johan’s story is shaped by the structural forces and everyday repertoires of ethnic and racial stratification in Australian society. His powerful descriptors, ‘conspicuous people of colour, the freak show, intruders’, bring to mind the concept of ‘space invaders’ that Puwar (2004:51) uses to capture a sense of ‘racialised bodies out of place in elite social space’. In Puwar’s analytical connection between bodies and public space, including workplace space, White bodies represent the undeclared universal norm and thus carry the undisputed right to occupy. When non-White bodies enter

such space, they inhabit a tenuous position because "their arrival brings into clear relief what has been able to pass as the invisible, unmarked and undeclared somatic norm" (Puwar, 2004:8). This conceptual link is utilised here to understand Johan's narrative as 'Brown bodies out of place' or, better put, 'Brown bodies in the wrong place in public space'.

This notion underlines the existence of structural racial inequality in Australia, discussed above in relation to Maria's 'Black body'. Without overstating the case, it can be argued that Brown bodies encountered in this restaurant as workplace employees, that is, as waiters, chefs and kitchen hands, conform to normalised cultural expectations. A large group of Brown bodies entering elite White social space as restaurant guests, assumed to belong elsewhere in the normal scheme of things, disrupts this cultural habituation and engenders an element of surprise and disorientation (Mills, 1998:53; Puwar, 2004:144). In terms of the reference to 'elite space', class and age differences intersect here with those of race (Nayak, 2005:146). Johan later reflects that Pacific Islanders, especially of his generation, are more 'at home' in rugby league clubs, Returned Services League (RSL) establishments and pubs rather than 'flash White middle-class bars'. Indeed, the research interview with Johan took place in one such establishment.

The effects on the norms of work are harder to ascertain in Johan's story, but it is possible to surmise the impacts of the experience on his son. The disjunction, highlighting the difference in acceptability in elite White space between a Brown body as restaurant worker and a Brown body as restaurant guest, may well erode something of the sense of achievement and meaning that he attaches to his work as a chef at this establishment. Johan notes that, at the time, his son 'laughed off his embarrassment and moved on'. According to Johan, this young Pacifica man enjoys his work as a chef, wants to gain workplace seniority and aims "to get on in life". There is a sense, too, in which Johan downplays the negative impact of this intercultural encounter and mildly censures cultural scripts of reactivity: "I think those kinds of experiences reinforce a touch of hypersensitivity". It may be that, for Johan and his son, a lack of hypersensitivity is a workable low-key approach to mitigating and managing the disruptions that subtle race-based disrespect engenders, both inside and outside the workplace.

These reflections, and Johan's claim that "the young bounce back", point to the second migrant generation's greater resilience and intercultural savvy in negotiating and restoring the normative claims of employment. Like Johan's son, Makere, the last participant to be introduced in this chapter, is a second-generation Pacifica migrant. Her narration below provides evidence of the damage of ethno-racial disrespect on her sense of achievement, contribution and meaningfulness gained through paid work. But it also provides further evidence of generational differences regarding the effects of, and responses to, ethno-racial misrecognition at work.

Makere: 'Do You Have A Visa To Work Here?'

Makere, a young New Zealand-born Polynesian, has lived in Australia since she was a child. She describes an incident that she experienced while working as a cashier, whereby a customer took exception to paying a parking ticket.

I was cashiering one afternoon and the customer, he was a White Australian, said to me, "Do you have a visa to work here?" And I said to him, "I beg your pardon?" And he said, "Do you have a visa to work here? Obviously you're not Australian". He was meaning, 'cause I'm Brown. And I said, "Well, that is your perception Sir. So you either pay for your parking ticket or I call the police". And he kind of got really angry and I said, "Well, you're bending the rules. Pay for your parking ticket or I'll call the police. I'm happy to call them now". He thought that by belittling me that he would have the upper hand. I went back to the main office and I told everyone, "How rude! How dare he say that to me!" And they were like, "What!" And I said, "I am offended!" And I thought, how can I get past this?

In this routine workplace encounter between customer and staff member, Makere understands herself as the recipient of ethno-racial misrecognition and her narrative demonstrates the elusive quality of new forms of racist slight. The customer's, "Do you have a visa to work here? Obviously you're not Australian", is a more covert mode of ethno-racial closure, particularly directed at the migrant worker. The covertness is not lost on Makere. This Pacifica worker's intense reaction conveys her certain knowledge that she has been 'belittled', that she is the recipient of an

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attempt to draw exclusionary moral boundaries across racial, citizenship and class groups (Lamont, 2000:3–5). That mode of exclusion is echoed in Elsie's and Johan's stories above, examples of the 'messy racial hegemony of contemporary times' (Omi's & Winant, 2002:139). It is made more comprehensible through concepts such as neo-racism (Balibar, 1991), subtle racism (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995), new racism (Clarke, 2003; Pettigrew, 2000; Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995) and symbolic racism (Henry & Sears, 2002; Sears, 1988; Tarman & Sears, 2005; Wood, 1994).

As discussed earlier, the samples of workplace ethno-racial misrecognition in this chapter reflect a hierarchy connected in complex ways across macro, mezzo and micro levels. In Makere's case, the reference to migrant worker visa regulations focuses attention on national and symbolic border regulation. While visa regulations attempt to guard concrete national borders, their symbolic use in everyday employment contexts signifies a process of boundary maintenance operating through disparate power relations between social groups. Power resides in constituting particular meanings in given contexts and passing them off as if these meanings were 'self-evident and definitive' (Brah, 1996:163/245). In Australia, the power to constitute the self-evident and definitive meanings of symbolic belonging continues to reside largely with the dominant Anglo-Celtic group.

In this regard, Noble and Poynting (2010) conceptualise a pedagogical process operating at structural and everyday levels whereby dominants 'teach' and migrants 'learn' who belongs inside and outside Australian borders. They argue that the global vilification of Muslims and Arabs, extended here to include all 'third world-looking people' (Hage, 1998:18), influences the affective and spatial regulation of national belonging. Compelled by a sense of border threat and group preservation (Brah, 1996:165; Castles, 2002:561), White citizens of Anglo-Celtic heritage act as 'the true belongers', embodying an entitlement to grant or withhold recognition. Non-White migrants, the Marias, Elsie's, Johans and Makere's of Australia, are constructed as deserving recipients of disrespect and may develop a sense of non-belonging. At the micro level, differential belonging gives permission for individual acts of racist denigration. The "pedagogic functions of social incivility" are to teach the foreign others to

perceive themselves as incompetent and illegitimate citizens and workers, that they do not belong to the nation (Noble & Poynting, 2010:501). This process emerges in fragmentary, taken-for-granted ways in the recognition relations of the everyday world. The sly denigration coming Makere's way can be viewed in this light, a kind of 'boundary violation equalisation' (Grinker, 1990:125) emerging in routine workplace relations between worker and customer.

Thus the encounter reflects a general social logic intruding into a particular work context. The customer's question, "Do you have a visa to work here? Obviously you're not Australian", is comprehensible as an act of social incivility with compensatory overtones, which employs standards of differential belonging. The White Australian, embodying 'the true believer's entitlement' to recognise or withhold recognition and very likely annoyed regarding the receipt of a parking fine, is further aggravated to encounter a Brown migrant worker to whom he must make payment. He is bound to abide by the social rules that are typical of a work setting, where in theory instrumental and pragmatic values count. But he appears to employ the extra-work boundary setting to try and 'weasel his way out' of the specific work context. In misrecognising the Brown migrant worker, the customer draws an exclusionary boundary and possibly expunges the disagreeable facts and discomforting feelings of the situation.

This point is a reminder that the psychosocial dynamics of the workplace are inextricably shaped by wider social and cultural structures. To be racialised in Western society is to be distinguished by, and often considered representative of, one's racial or ethnic group while the White norm, generally unmarked by racial categories in everyday contexts, tends to represent humanity as a whole (Austin & Hickey, 2007; Dyer, 1997:2; Garner, 2007:34–47; Nayak, 2003:172). In workplace contexts, denigrating responses are unconsciously mobilised in order to organise the psychosocial relations of recognition in such a way that they mirror these existing patterns of domination and marginalisation (Dalal, 2002:198). This implies that the psychological and emotional projections of ethno-racial misrecognition at work are always already patterned by the hegemonic power arrangements that prevail. In other words, "the emotions are used to enhance the perception of the distance between the 'us' and

the 'them' in order that 'we' act towards 'them' in ways that accord with the well-being of 'us'" (Dalal, 2002:184).

From the Honnethian perspective, such exclusionary practices are especially crucial in employment contexts. They have the effect of objectifying recipients and thus denying due recognition of work-related accomplishment and contribution, with potentially negative impacts on self-esteem and mental well-being. In proposing the notion of the 'psychological gaps of misrecognition', in the cases analysed in this chapter perhaps better put as 'the psychic dissonance of ethno-racial misrecognition', Honneth (1995c:257) is specifically referring to a psychological rift that opens up in the personality of the recipient. However, denigration in the labour domain is a psychosocial rupture in the relations of recognition that, by definition, involves all parties concerned. In other words, psychological gaps emerge for both misrecognised and misrecogniser in misrecognition encounters at work.

Honneth's concept can therefore be usefully employed to analyse the psychological processes of the denigrator as well. To return momentarily to aged care worker Maria's encounter with her White elderly client, the fact that the latter is dependent on and obliged to feel gratitude towards this Black subject for her work of care (Gregoratto, 2016:61), double gratitude in fact, might well exacerbate his general disposition to racially denigrate Maria. He can be understood as displaying psychic dissonance through dependence, ambivalence and the defensive responses of denial and projection (Clarke, 2003:130/146; Dalal, 2002:188; Miller & Schamess, 2000:48). Similarly, at a psychological level, Makere's customer may be compensating for his feelings of irrational anger regarding the receipt of a parking fine through his own actions, by 'taking it out' on Makere. He too can be understood as displaying dependence, ambivalence and the defensive responses of denial and projection, in that he has no choice but to pay the fine to this Brown migrant worker.

Moreover, the broad pattern of power relations framing this workplace interaction is made more complex by the work context, because norms specific to work come into play. As with Maria and Elsie, denigration at work matters to Makere because work matters. Makere says that she 'has a tertiary qualification, is over thirty and single' as a way of explaining her lack of fit in the 'Pacific Islands mould'. While she acknowledges signs of

change, Makere claims that the traditional cultural repertoire regarding marriage and child rearing as the primary vocation for Pacifica women continues to hold sway in the Australian diaspora. She explains that she is focused on her career, seeks variety and challenge in her work, and has held a number of responsible well-paid positions in the corporate and business worlds since the cashiering job. Currently working as a consultant in a private employment agency, Makere laughingly admits that she is ready to undertake her next educational qualification and associated career move. Thus keen for work diversity and promotion for herself, Makere also professes to derive a strong sense of achievement in successfully placing young Pacific Islanders and other ethnic minority job seekers in 'good paid work'. She understands her efforts as contributing significantly to the Pacifica diaspora, where youth unemployment and low-status occupations are the cause of concern to its leaders (this topic will be specifically addressed in Chapter [Six](#)), and also as contributing to the Australian social good more generally.

Like Maria and Elsie, and indeed Johan, voluntary community work is also a significant aspect of Makere's life, and like Elsie, her voluntary efforts are linked to her paid work role. In both roles, she is particularly focused on youth advocacy and the instilling of a work ethic amongst young Pacific Islanders so that they are equipped to successfully participate in gainful employment as the main source of their social identity and worth, and therefore as a main route to successful integration in Australian society. Makere appears to attach a deep sense of satisfaction and meaning to her voluntary efforts to raise the participation and status of Pacific Island youth in the workforce. In this regard, she explains that she has young Pacifica nieces and nephews with 'their hands out to her for money' or 'already on the dole'. She professes to tell them, and their parents, that 'they need to stay at school, leave with decent qualifications and get good jobs because that is the way forward for our young people'.

As it did for Maria and Elsie, Makere's response to misrecognition reverberates with righteous indignation and anger: I went back to the main office and I told everyone, "How rude! How dare he say that to me". But unlike these previous participants, Makere is of a younger generation of Pacific Island migrants. Second and third diaspora generations are frequently represented as having accumulated a greater degree of rec-

ognised social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2000:20/188), and what might be called a strategic flexibility that bridges host and homeland cultures (Noble, 2007:341). In the Australian context, Noble et al. (1999) highlight some of the ways in which, compared to first-generation migrants, the second and third generations 'make their lives more habitable' through a dynamic process that mixes elements of identification and cultural scripts drawn from the parents' homeland background with those emerging from participation in Australian society.

Thus we can understand second-generation Makere as embodying greater resilience, better honed negotiation skills and a 'strategic hybridity' (Noble et al., 1999:39) that seems to draw on different cultural scripts in response to racial disrespect at work. For example, while individual dispositions are also at play, her responses can be contrasted with those of first-generation Marias on several counts. Makere's rapid professional response "Well that is your perception Sir", the refusal to back down "Well, you're bending the rules. Pay for your parking ticket or I'll call the police", her fiery indignation and lack of shame "How rude! How dare he say that to me", her willingness to share her outrage with her colleagues "I went back to the main office and I told everyone I am offended", and her self-reflective comment "And I thought, how can I get past this?" all point in the direction of a more integrated self-perception and a greater degree of assertive empowerment in restoring the positive norms of work. Moreover, even while Makere intensely experiences and angrily responds to the denigrating work encounter, she is already contemplating a strategic and restorative 'getting past it'.

Indeed, it is suggested that Makere enacts what might be called a 'second-generation cultural repertoire' regarding ethno-racial misrecognition at work. She reflects later on the familiarity of disrespect and maintains that the more familiar the experience, the more she utilises a light-hearted minimisation strategy. In the context of restorative responses to denigration, she laughs and says, "I don't let it bother me too much otherwise I wouldn't get anywhere". Ambitious and restless, Makere is more interested in enhancing her employability potential through ongoing education and job experience. Similarly, Johan's son's decision to 'laugh off disrespect at work and get on in life and career' reflects a 'non-hypersensitive' approach that was encountered regularly during fieldwork

amongst younger motivated Pacifica workers. During one conversation, a young Polynesian customer service officer claimed to have registered an awareness of a vague ambivalent attitude, 'kind of floating about in the ether', regarding his ethnic and racial origins. Oriented to succeed in his career, he chose to ignore this ambiguous territory, progress to supervisor and 'make his family proud'. As Kate indicated in Chapter [One](#), 'doing well' in education and employment is a highly prized cultural norm in the Pacifica diaspora. Younger Pacifica workers seem to strategically distance themselves by downplaying racism in the workplace, and instead acknowledge the better employment opportunities that they encounter in Australia compared to what is available for 'the cousins back home'. It is a cultural script that more or less sidesteps the disruptions of stoical acceptance, shame, indignant anger, silent resistance and moral superiority. It thus frees up psychic and physical energy for a focus on career development, and the sense of accomplishment, contribution and material success that doing well at work can engender.

Based on this analysis, it would seem that some second-generation migrants have found in work precisely the best way to overcome the diffuse racism that pervades other social spaces. Paid employment has relatively objective measures of performance, skills and expertise, which even pure bigots find hard to overlook. Pacifica workers can draw on these instrumental and pragmatic aspects of work to construct a robust sense of self and reject marginalisation. Their professional identities can provide them with a strong platform for self-confidence in the face of everyday racist misrecognition. The chef in Johan's story is illustrative. As a professional in his professional space, wearing his professional uniform, he is fully acknowledged and esteemed, with problems of recognition and respect only likely to occur when he steps out of the work role. In that sense, and although ambiguous, professional employment may almost represent 'a sacred sphere' for young ambitious migrant workers. This might explain, to some degree, the outrage that Makere expresses when ethno-racial misrecognition intrudes into that sphere. Young Pacifica workers may be using their success at work as a positive way of negotiating the complex tensions between being a migrant and being Australian, between first-generation expectations and second-generation experiences.

Before closing this section, let us revisit the notion of voluntary work. All four participants in this chapter, and many more encountered during research, are significantly involved in voluntary community work. Voluntary work is, of course, a feature of most cultural groups. Its motivations are complex but for many, volunteering engenders a sense of achievement, self-esteem and satisfaction (Holmes, 2009; Wilson, 2000). The chapter's analysis, particularly regarding Maria, suggests that participation in a voluntary capacity may help to restore the normative claims of work damaged through ethno-racial misrecognition in the paid employment realm. However, beyond this consideration, research fieldwork discovered a specific Pacific Islands sense of work as social contribution, outside of gainful employment, that is highly valued in the diaspora. It found significant participation in Pacifica NGOs, community organisations, youth groups, church-based aid and unpaid social work, epitomised perhaps in voluntary night patrols in town centres. This cultural repertoire, which could be called 'caring for the community to make the community work', may be motivated by a shared historical experience of migrant disadvantage in the diaspora (Lamont, 2000:48–49).

However, this powerful cultural norm does sometimes echo with moral evaluation, the placing of one's community 'above the communities above' (Lamont, 1999a). Participating in a discussion of youth issues at a diaspora meeting during fieldwork, one Pacifica women commented, "It's a pity the Palagi (White Anglo) community is not more involved with their wayward young people". There were nods of agreement and, had she been in attendance, it is likely that Maria would have concurred. She had much to say about 'the Aussie neglect of their young folk'. The cultural repertoire of 'a caring community' may be utilised by Pacific Islanders to draw an ascendant moral boundary, in comparison to the Anglo community, that assists in maintaining dignity and self-respect in the face of ethno-racial denigration and occupational stratification more generally.

Conclusion

Chapter [Five](#) has investigated intercultural (mis)recognition as it is shaped by ethno-racial identification, that is, 'who one is racially and ethnically', in everyday work contexts. It presented phenomenological samples of

ethno-racial misrecognition narrated by Pacifica workers during field-work. The analysis identified ways in which old and new modes of such micro level marginalisation at work, specifically overt insult, stereotyping, territorial domination and border closure, mirror enduring structures of inequality at mezzo and macro levels. It also discussed the significant disruptive consequences of racial marginalisation for the workers' identification *as workers*, and the corrosive impacts on the norms of paid work. The chapter delineated some of the responses to ethno-racial disrespect at work, such as disempowering shame and self-negation. But just as importantly, it also fleshed out some of the complexities of adaptive agency, the ways in which Pacifica workers attempt to rehabilitate the normative claims of work. Some of these restorative scripts include righteous indignation, oppositional anger, ignoring silence, moral superiority, bureaucratic intervention, a philosophical stance, humour, appeals to alternative recognition audiences, career advancement and success at work. For workers of the second generation particularly, successful work performance and professional identity itself represent a strong platform for self-assertion to counteract everyday racist denigration at work. However, there is the question regarding the extent to which restorative agency undermines the potential for collective action that might lead to a struggle for recognition aimed at changing the existing recognition order.

Ethno-racial misrecognition is not unique to the domain of paid work, emerging as it does in many social contexts. However, it is of particular significance in the work domain because, as established in Chapter [Four](#), paid employment remains a primary means of individual and societal integration. Specifically, misrecognition of 'who one is racially and ethnically at work' interferes with the esteem recognition workers deserve for their legitimate achievements and contributions through work, and the sense of meaningfulness that may flow from these resources. This argument is anchored in a reconstruction of Honneth's second and third critical conceptions of work as they were elucidated in the first section of the chapter. Racial denigration disrupts the norm of achievement by reducing its recipients to racial and ethnic categories, rather than acknowledging them fully as human working subjects deserving of just social esteem for the accomplishments of the paid work in which they have engaged.

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Ethno-racial misrecognition also erodes the norm of meaningful contribution. Disrespect directed at subjects willing to provide socially beneficial services through their work potentially erodes the legitimacy of mutual contribution to labour exchange, that sense of satisfying the obligation one owes others in the society.

In conclusion we can say that, following Honneth, subjects are dependent on the reception of social esteem regarding their achievements and contributions and the sense of meaningfulness flowing from them, particularly in the domain of paid work, to enable the growth of positive identity and self-relations. Ethno-racial misrecognition interferes with the opportunities of autonomous working agents to secure the recognition that leads to positive self-relations, even while the legitimacy of modern liberal societies such as Australia depends on the capacity to make the basis of such relations available to all subjects. Ultimately, ethno-racial misrecognition at work matters critically because it potentially diminishes the possibilities of self-esteem, self-realisation and autonomy for subject workers from minority cultural traditions, and weakens the social bonds that are developed through work. The next chapter will continue the focus on intercultural (mis)recognition, this time specifically concerning 'what one does for work'.

Chapter Six

Everyday Intercultural (Mis)Recognition and 'What One Does For Work'

The three empirical chapters that constitute Part Two of this book are delineated along the lines of 'who one is', 'what one does' and 'how one practises' at work. The preceding chapter, focused on 'who one is ethnically and racially at work', underlined the vulnerability of workers from minority cultural traditions to the disintegrative effects of everyday ethno-racial misrecognition. It also analysed some of the ways in which workers respond to such misrecognition, including responses aimed at rehabilitating a sense of achievement and contribution that are, according to the reconstruction of Honneth's conceptions of work devised to anchor that chapter's critique, normative in paid employment. This chapter moves the focus to cross-cultural relations of recognition regarding 'what one does for work', that is, ethno-racial difference as it is linked to the status of a paid occupation and that occupation's expectations and duties. Elaborated below, the critical analysis of intercultural (mis)recognition and 'what one does for work' is anchored in a reconstruction of all three of Honneth's critical conceptions of work, and thus esteem recognition associated with the norms of achievement, contribution and performance in the realm of paid occupations.

As with the previous focus on ethno-racial identification at work, the theme of ethno-racial identity related to occupational status and

occupational tasks was quickly evoked through the organic research process. For the Pacific Island participants whose voices are heard in this chapter, job market participation and the work it involves prove to be a complex source of recognition and misrecognition. However, uppermost in many minds is an acute consciousness of the pervasive association of Pacific Islanders, as part of the traditional Australian migrant worker cohort, with low-status, poorly remunerated racialised jobs. Thus cross-cultural misrecognition regarding occupation and occupational activity hold greater resonance, constituting a source of social devaluation and alienation that is an entrenched reality of everyday life for many. This situation raises questions regarding the social arbiters of worthwhile achievement and contribution through one's employment position, as well as the unequal access of marginalised groups to the value horizon that shapes the prevailing norms of occupational status. It requires analysis of the ways in which a stratified occupational order structures the normative value of work and work tasks and therefore, from the Honnethian perspective, the possibilities of self-esteem, self-realisation and autonomy for workers from minority racial, ethnic and cultural traditions, as well as the wider issue of the integration of ethnically diverse societies. Utilising Pacifica participants' narratives, this chapter will critically investigate these important questions.

Chapter Six is structured in three sections. The first section elaborates the Honneth-based framework that anchors the chapter's critical analysis of intercultural (mis)recognition regarding 'what one does for work'. The next section addresses ethno-cultural difference in terms of Pacific Islanders' over-representation in racialised low-status occupations and the sense of community alienation linked to this perception. The third section is focused on intercultural relations of recognition regarding the tasks associated with the low-status occupations often inhabited by Pacific Islanders, particularly manual, menial and semi-skilled work activity. The analysis in both these sections will emphasise some of the ways in which cross-cultural misrecognition of occupations and occupational activity disrupts the reception of social esteem recognition in terms of the norms of achievement, contribution and performance at work.

A Honneth-Based Critique of Intercultural (Mis)Recognition Regarding 'What One Does For Work'

The analysis of intercultural (mis)recognition implicit in the concept of 'what one does for work' draws resources from all three of Honneth's critical conceptions of work, as they were outlined in Chapter [Four](#). These three models identify the social esteem recognition of individual achievement at work, the public recognition of contribution to the mutual exchange of goods and services in society, and esteem recognition regarding the performance and product of work activities as bearing vital consequences for the possibilities of self-esteem, and thus self-realisation and autonomy, of subject workers.

We begin with Honneth's second critical conception of work, where the possibilities of self-esteem are understood to depend upon the reception of social esteem recognition for achievement in paid occupations and occupational tasks (Honneth, 1995f). However, in the interests of reproducing the established recognition order, the interpretations of the most powerful groups in society dominate the value horizon regarding estimations of socially valid accomplishment. These ascendant value discourses and their embedded cultural prejudices filter through to relations of recognition at work, and may engender the experience of misrecognition for the members of marginalised racial, ethnic and cultural groups. Such negative experience might emerge in the form of a sense of invisibility or disrespect regarding achievement in the occupational sectors in which they are largely employed, as well as in the associated occupational tasks in which they engage.

Critical analysis of 'what one does for work' can also draw from Honneth's third model, encompassing as it does social esteem recognition for contribution to the exchange of goods and services in a society (Honneth, 2010). The legitimacy of the social division of labour, that sense of satisfying the obligation one owes others, is questionable when the ascendant interpretations in the value horizon sustain the estimations of worthwhile contribution that in turn shape occupational status. Given that it is often minority ethno-racial groups who are over-represented in low-status occupations and their associated low-status activities, critique

can address the lack of reciprocity of contribution to labour exchange. Moreover, low-status employment is often poorly remunerated regardless of the perceived value of the contribution. Critical analysis can thus target pay rates, arguing that wages should be commensurate with the true social value of the contribution regardless of status, as well as with the sustainability of an independent livelihood and reasonable standard of living. In addition, low-status occupations usually involve menial, monotonous or 'dirty work' tasks that can generate social depreciation, with potentially corrosive effects on the norm of meaningful contribution through work.

A further understanding of meaningfulness, based on Honneth's first critical conception of work (Honneth, 1995g) and developments of this model by recognition and work specialists, comes into play here as well. The necessity and benefits of monetary income provide the main motivation for most workers to participate in the activity required of paid occupations. Beyond these instrumental requirements, however, the performative aspects of concrete occupational duties in terms of expression, co-operation, self-direction and quality can be understood as carrying, if recognised, self-forming and transforming capacities (Dejours, 2007, 2012). In other words, social esteem recognition of the application of practical intelligence and creativity to successfully grapple with the realities of concrete work tasks potentially engenders self-development and enriches subjectivity (Dejours, 2014:123–125; Dejours & Deranty, 2010:172). It might seem, on the surface, that the confronting nature of some menial tasks or the tedium of much low-status work activity, in which workers from minority ethnic groups are frequently engaged, provides little opportunity for such self-development. However, these workers may gain a significant measure of self-fulfilment from their work and take pride in meeting the challenges it presents, no matter how insignificant or lacking in complexity and meaning such challenges may appear to others, especially others occupying higher status employment. An absence of esteem recognition regarding their performance then minimises the work task's self-transformative possibilities, potentially wearing away self-esteem and a sense of purpose and meaningfulness.

The chapter's analysis of intercultural (mis)recognition related to 'what one does for work' is anchored in these three critical conceptions. Critique is, therefore, specifically linked to esteem recognition of achievement, contribution including reasonable pay, and performance including the expressive, autonomous, co-operative aspects of working activity, as these norms are substantiated in occupational identities. The chapter is especially interested in the ways in which cross-cultural misrecognition of occupational status and occupational tasks erodes these norms and thus individual well-being and the social bonds through which recognition at work is attributed.

Occupational Status and Esteem Recognition Pacific Islanders and Occupational (Mis)Recognition

'So what do you do?' After an initial exchange of names, this is one of the most habitual inquiries proffered in a greeting encounter in Western societies such as Australia. It signifies the powerful role that paid work plays in structuring social integration (Newman & Ellis, 1999:152). Indeed, despite a post-war loosening of attachment to occupational class (Thompson, 2006:2), the majority of subjects continue to attach their social identity, and therefore expectations of social recognition, primarily to their role in the organised labour process (Honneth, 2010:224; Svendsen, 2008:2; Vallas, 2012:6–7). In the historic gendered words of influential Chicago School sociologist Everett Cherrington Hughes (1958, 1994:57), "a man's work is one of the things by which he is judged, and certainly one of the more significant things by which he judges himself". Hughes' concept suggests complex social norms regarding vocational identity and valorisation in the everyday world, two of which are of particular relevance in this discussion. Firstly, the revelation of occupational identity confirms mutuality, that is, confirmation that one does indeed do something to contribute to the social exchange of goods and services. Secondly, the disclosure of occupation enables others to locate the status and judge the value of that contribution.

In this regard, we turn to a short excerpt drawn from a longer narrative presented in the preceding chapter. The excerpt is relevant here because

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in it, Polynesian aged care worker Maria links personal ethno-racial disrespect at work, the 'Black bitch' insult, to disrespect of her work and, more broadly, of the aged care employment sector and its significant contingent of Pacific Island workers. In essence, Maria succinctly captures the issue constitutive of intercultural relations of recognition regarding 'what one does for one's work'.

But then you either get called a Black bitch or, you know, go back to where you came from. ... Yep, well, it's like who you are or what you do (for work). It's disrespectful. Yep, there's no respect for this (aged care) work, no respect for us (Pacific Islanders) doin' it. ... You know, I been told you PIs (Pacific Islanders) do this (aged care work) 'cause you're no good at anything else. Not as though you need any qualifications.

Mary, a social worker and respected elder in the Pacifica community, also expresses herself with energy on this topic. She makes a link between the perception of Pacifica people as low-status employees and young Pacific islanders' occupational prospects.

Actually it makes me really angry that we're (Pacific Islanders) stereotyped for employment here (Australia). Yeah, Pacific Islanders are good at culture and physical (activities), sports and the like! But where does that leave our young people? They're still getting the jobs in factories and warehouses and the like. They're not considered for other areas and they don't consider themselves for it (other employment sectors) either. 'Cause they think they're not good for anything else, anything that matters.

We will return to this excerpt in a later section, but here it is Mary's colloquial reference to 'jobs that matter' that is of significance. As with Maria's earlier comment, it captures the phenomenon whereby occupations carry variable levels of legitimating status (Renault, 2012:142; Sennett, 2006:112/190), in other words social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2001), in relation to their position in a complex hierarchy of social prestige. Occupational status hierarchies and work formations, varying within and across historical contexts, are a reproduction of wider unequal social relations (Anderson, 2000:17; Vallas, 2012:3). They are heavily influenced, some argue distorted (Smith & Deranty,

2012a:58), by the interpretations of powerful groups and vocational sectors in society. The ascendant values ‘seep into subjects’ through socialisation and are expressed in cultural repertoires, subjective dispositions and bodily habitus (Bourdieu, 2000:138–142; Deranty, 2009a:327/477; Wacquant, 1992:18). In other words, we carry ideas regarding work that matters “in our heads” (Newman & Ellis, 1999:151) and “in our bones” (O’Neill, 1985:24). These notions powerfully shape the symbolic recognition awarded to different occupations and their incumbents, and thus significant inequity in status, financial rewards and working conditions (Edwards, 2003:4; Wolkowitz, 2006:25). As an aside, the historical contestation regarding ‘the definition of a profession’ continues in contemporary recognition struggles for increased shares of occupational status and market position (Macdonald, 1995:188; Sennett, 2006:110).

Moreover, some values remain more or less stable in occupational hierarchies. One such is the mind-body hierarchy, reflected in the mental-manual and skilled-unskilled divides (Sennett, 2006:6/85–86; Willis, 1977:147; Willis, 2004:174), that is particularly significant in the analysis of the Pacifica population’s occupational position in Australia. Certainly, Mary’s disparaging “factories and warehouses and the like” implies that the unskilled and menial jobs often inhabited by Pacifica workers are marked down in the occupational hierarchy and thus depreciated in terms of recognised achievement and contribution, reasonable pay, performative qualities and meaningfulness. A developing trend to idealise or pay ‘positive lip service’ to the value of care work (Huang et al., 2012:198) aside, aged care worker Maria also claims to be the recipient of a pervasive and alienating social depreciation through her occupational position. In her mind, respect is withheld for the services of the aged care worker and more widely, the aged care sector and its workforce. Indeed, such occupations are often racialised, a condition that potentially impinges negatively on the Pacifica and other migrant workers who tend to congregate in such low-status sectors.

The notion of racialised occupations, race-typing or the racial division of labour, sheds light on the perception of Pacific Islanders as low-status workers in Australia. The concept refers to the clustering of certain ethno-racial groups in certain employment sectors, which is an established fea-

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ture of many cultures (Vallas, 2012:124). In developed Western countries such as Australia, colonial processes have shaped a racial division of labour whereby non-White groups are over-represented in the manual and semi-skilled sectors and under-represented in managerial and professional positions (Castles & Miller, 2009; Collins et al., 2000:122–125; Glenn, 1992:30; Herod & Aguiar, 2006:7; Spoonley, 1996; Stevens et al., 2012:261; Sudo, 1997b:4). Thus members of ethno-racial minorities disproportionately fill the low-skilled end of the occupational hierarchy, those jobs appearing to require more bodily than intellectual labour that more privileged groups prefer to leave to others. Perceptions of future labour market prospects are also known to be lower amongst ethnic minorities than they are amongst workers from majority groups (Ng & Sears, 2010).

In relation to Pacific Island migrants in Western nations, Horton (2012:2397 citing Maclellan & Mares, 2005) wryly points out that while in quest of the three 'Es' (education, employment and enjoyment), Pacifica people tend to secure work that involves the three 'Ds' (dirty, difficult and dangerous). Table 6.1 provides evidence of Polynesians' concentration in the semi-skilled and non-professional employment sectors in Australia. As this table shows, Pacific Islanders of Polynesian ancestry are over-represented at the lower end of the occupational hierarchy compared to the general population of workers. Some participants in this research did observe that multicultural impetus has seen more Pacifica workers moving into occupational sectors connected with the 'delivery of ethnic services', such as social work and educational liaison, and this appears to be reflected in the statistics. Chapter Seven will specifically focus on Pacific Islanders working in these areas. However, in Mary's view, Pacifica people continue to swell the ranks of jobs that 'don't matter much' and other research participants echo her sentiments. Here is Susan, a Polynesian nurse aide.

So, you'll find more Pacific Islanders in the hospital, nurse aide not the nurse. And in the school, the teacher aide but not the teacher (laughs). I'm a nurse aid so, living proof (laughs and stretches out arms expansively in a take a bow gesture).

Table 6.1 The Occupational Distribution of Polynesians in the Australian Work Force 1991–2011

	1991		2001		2011	
	Persons of Polynesian Birthplace	Total Population	Persons of Polynesian Ancestry	Total Population	Persons of Polynesian Ancestry	Total Population
Managers and Administrators	0.79	5.12	0.86	4.13	1.85	6.05
Professionals or Associate Professionals	3.46	8.15	4.81	13.41	3.39	10.31
Trades Workers and Technicians	4.20	5.69	2.78	5.19	3.24	5.99
Clerical, Administrative Community and Personal Service Workers	6.61	12.36	10.63	13.06	12.43	15.34
Production and Transport Workers	9.05	2.91	7.65	3.42	7.88	2.88
Labourers and Related Workers	13.98	5.16	6.64	3.46	7.35	3.95
Inadequately Described or not Stated	4.93	2.65	1.36	0.89	1.06	0.83
Total Employed	43.02	42.04	34.74	43.53	37.20	45.37

Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)

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Susan's cheerful quip and self-deprecating humour aside (more on this later), occupational race-typing arouses some of the research participants' most intensely expressed responses. The reflection below, contributed once more by an angry Maria, reinforces the perception of Pacific Islanders as migrant workers more or less suited to thankless occupations that require seemingly few skills or educational qualifications.

Who are the heavy labourers that they have now in Australia? The majority of them are Pacific Islanders, you know, also the Torres Strait (Islanders). They come here. They're working in the factories. They do the work for the Aussies to get their products done but they get treated badly. ... And (these groups are also) doing the cleaning, cleaning up after the Aussies. There's no thanks for it. It's not fair.

Similarly Ben, an older Polynesian man who has worked in the security and music industries, highlights the way in which Pacific Islanders in Australia tend to cluster in low-status sectors while remaining largely absent from high-status spheres. His use of the phrase 'end up in' in this extract denotes a sense of the Pacific Islander caught in 'dead-end' race-typed occupations that, in his view, do not appear to count for much in terms of the norms of paid work.

In this country, Pacific Islanders get respect for just a few things that they're good at. Sports! Ya know? And cultural performance, singin' an' dancin' (grins and mimes guitar strumming). Australians love that (about Pacific Islanders). But in terms of jobs in the real world, a lot are unemployed (or) end up in security, baggage (handling), ya know, removal (work). We're big people (laughs). ... A lot of (Pacific Island) women are in cleaning and ya know, rest homes (aged care) sort of thing. ... You don't find many ... as doctors and lawyers if ya know what I mean (laughs).

Sonny, a young Pacifica nightclub security officer, a 'bouncer' in colloquial language, also highlights the race-typing of Pacific Islanders in low-status occupations. But as with Ben, Sonny raises a complex juxtaposition between occupational misrecognition and aspects of positive recognition, a topic to be taken up in detail below.

Yep well, we're (Pacific Islanders) seen as good at music and playing sport. But when it comes to jobs, we're only good for work like in bouncers at bars and stuff.

As Vallas (2012:124) points out, race-typed work carries “an intensely symbolic value in that it publicly symbolises the inferiority of those compelled to perform it—and, by implication, it reaffirms the superiority of those who benefit from such work”. This is not so far from the colonial regime, the White household with its attendant Black servants or the White-owned industry with its Brown labourers, where the degradation of Black and Brown workers was instituted both by the work they did *and* by the servile social relationship in which that work was situated (Collins, 2000:52–58; Glenn, 1992:7; Wolkowitz, 2006:38–39). The racial division of labour endures, as these Pacifica workers demonstrate in their reflections, and so denigration and inequality persist through paid work even though they are abolished, in principle, by law.

Moreover, the racialisation of low-status work compounds the devaluing of those employment sectors (Vallas, 2012:124), generating a type of vicious dialectic that reinforces occupational misrecognition. For example, Mary's observation that Pacific Islanders continue to be employed “in factories and warehouses and the like” illustrates a notion that these already demeaned occupations are further devalued because Pacifica and other migrant workers congregate there. Maria's rhetorical question regarding Pacifica people as the heavy labourers appears to intimate that what she understands to be the marginal social esteem awarded to heavy labouring is further reduced due to the relegation of Pacific Islanders to this sector, doing the work that ‘the Aussies now consider beneath them’. The reported accusation that Pacific Islanders gain employment in aged care because ‘they're no good at anything else’ suggests that they are perceived to dominate the aged care sector, whether or not they actually do, and it is this circumstance that contributes to the further social devaluation of that industry. The dialectic is even more pronounced in female- and immigrant-dominated occupations such as aged care and cleaning, where the traditional under-valuing of women's work and migrant work (Anderson, 2000:1/142; Norris et al., 2005:139–155; Ridgeway & England, 2007:193–202; Scutt, 1992:281) combine to powerfully reinforce occupational misrecognition.

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Other participant voices note the race-typing of Pacific Islanders in devalued occupational sectors, but also make a link to particular 'cultural aptitudes' or repertoires regarding work. Suki, a young unemployed Polynesian who is contemplating enrolment at Technical and Further Education College (TAFE), claims a specific kind of race or 'cultural aptitude typing' that denigrates intelligence and the capacity to gain skills and qualifications.

I can't get a good job 'cause I left school without quals (qualifications). Lot of us (Pacific Islanders) don't (get qualifications before leaving school). People think we're dumb, you know. We're not, but that's how they think.

Echoing Mary's earlier comment, an Anglo teacher working in a secondary school with a large Pacifica student population observed that in his experience, Pacific Island students know that vocational success matters but many, widely expected and expecting to gain low-ranking jobs, do not aim for anything else. "It's in the culture", he said, going on to lament the numerous ways in which many Pacifica parents fail to model an attitude of ambition towards higher educational and occupational achievement. This observation resonates with Willis' well-known picture of 'the working-class lads' in *Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs*. There, the young men's educational and vocational aspirations cannily matched the reality of their economic and structural position in society (Willis, 1977; Willis, 2004:171–172). In a similar vein William, a Pacific Islands educational liaison officer, captures below the common perception of Pacifica young men who, unable to gain useful qualifications, head for low-skilled employment or criminality when they leave school.

If other students were to learn about other kid's cultures they'd value them more. Instead of just looking at that kid, 'cause he's an Islander, he's just a big thug and that's all he's gonna be.

Patsy, a young Polynesian who works in job placement, maintains that the employers with whom she deals frequently associate Pacific Island job seekers with cultural repertoires of unreliability and irresponsibility in a work environment, even when their skills are comparable with others who seek similar employment.

I've come across employers that say to me, straight to my face, "I do not want any Islanders". They can't really say it because it is against the law. But they will say, you know, just on the quiet, the reason why. "It is not because I don't like them, but in a work environment, they're prone to be a bit unreliable, can't handle responsibility". What they're actually saying to me is, Islanders are lazy, Islanders have a problem with punctuality, (Islanders are) only good for rubbish jobs. ... I laugh at it. It's the only way I can get past it, is not laugh at it exactly but look at it as, it's not my problem. It's their (the employers') problem.

Whereas other spheres of social life seem increasingly more egalitarian, work has specific values that seem to set certain groups of people apart regarding higher status occupations. These latter transcripts, linking ethno-racial identity and reputation with particular cultural repertoires in the Western world of work, seem to indicate that success in this world requires specific qualifications and a certain 'cultural aptitude', that is, the right qualities, skills and mental attitude. The (Western) aptitudes highlighted above prioritise the gaining of qualifications, professionalism, punctuality, responsibility, reliability and industriousness. It is suggested that a deficiency of these aptitudes continues to restrict access to esteem recognition through work for Pacific Island people. However, it can also be argued that different cultural aptitudes and priorities come into play for Pacifica workers. Vincent, a Polynesian man working in the media, highlights this point while discussing the Pacifica reputation for 'being workshy' and the way in which 'he lost a high powered job due to misunderstandings about his reliability when he took leave to attend a family funeral'.

Ah yes, Pacific Islanders do sometimes go awol (absent without leave), you know, and I can understand how bosses, um, get frustrated by that. But, but, you have to understand that there is a lot of pressure on them, especially regarding their families and the church. Um, it's a conflict. ... Ah, there's a lot of recognition out there for, um, our sport and dance, but there's not a depth of appreciation for Pacific Island values as such, ah, our sense of the spiritual, the rituals, the family, um, the importance of people over things. ... Ah, work is important to Pacifica people but, even at times, there are other things (priorities) that have to be, ah, taken into account.

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Alison, a young Polynesian working successfully in community services, draws attention to similar themes.

Pacific islanders have strong values around the family. They will put the group before their own concerns and church is a huge part of the culture. It (these priorities) can, kind of like, cause problems if those commitments conflict with school or work. I find that myself sometimes. I guess, as I said before, it's not about totally changing the way we were (are). It's about balancing priorities and I guess adapting to the way Australians do things. You can still have those important internal values, but I guess it's about how you adapt, so that you're holding down a good job and living a good life in Australia.

These last three narratives highlight alternative cultural values that rub up against the requirements of paid occupations in the Western world. Utilising Honneth's model, the phenomenon can be understood as reflecting a value horizon conflict regarding the way in which the core norm of productive work is interpreted. The prevailing economic concern with efficiency, productivity and accountability is in tension with the submerged less economic Pacific perspective, where greater priority is given to family, communal and spiritual matters. The conflict indicates that, despite the entrenchment of formal equality in Australia's multicultural workplaces, informal inequality persists through alternative cultural formations and everyday practices that do not quite fit with ascendant interpretations of worthwhile occupations and the traits required to succeed in them. The phenomenon is likely to contribute to, indeed compound, the over-representation of Pacific Islanders in low-status low-paid jobs in Australia.

The analysis of fieldwork narratives that has been presented in this section strongly suggests that occupational misrecognition is a common experience for Pacific Island workers in Australia. The perceived and actual over-representation of this minority ethno-racial group at the lower end of the occupational ladder, caught up in the racial division of labour, is likely to impede opportunities to build occupation-related capital and garner the self-esteem that is generated by the social valuation of contribution, accomplishment and performance through one's occupation.

The Norms of Work: A Complex Blend of Recognition and Misrecognition

As established earlier, this chapter anchors its critical analysis of intercultural (mis)recognition in the norms of achievement, contribution and performance, as these norms are substantiated in occupational identities. This section will consider the effects of occupational recognition and misrecognition on Pacific Island workers largely in terms of the norms of contribution and achievement, while particular attention will be paid to the recognition of the performance of working activity in a later section.

Let us begin with the norm of contribution to the social exchange of services as it is recognised in remuneration rates. In this regard, research informants seemed to assign minimal significance to pay rates. For example, Sonny, the young Pacifica man employed as a bouncer, maintained that the security sector's wage scales were "Ok, not flash, but you can get by on it". A lack of attention to pay rates commensurate with the ability to sustain an independent livelihood is surprising given the relatively low-income levels in this community. It may be the result of researcher bias, steering the conversation towards symbolic rather than material modes of recognition. It might also reflect a cultural script that compares Australian remuneration rates favourably against those of Pacific Island nations, 'better than what the cousins can earn back home', or that protest regarding pay is considered a waste of energy in the neo-liberal economy. Based on the transcripts above and fieldwork observations though, it is suggested that misrecognition of contribution through low wage rates is less disturbing to the participants than misrecognition of contribution associated with low status and the racial division of labour. While wage income matters, the lack of reciprocal symbolic valuation of contribution to labour exchange for those in low-paid racialised occupations may be more galling. This suggestion resonates with Dejours' argument that the positive psychological impact of salary increases depends less on the actual increase and more on the symbolic recognition that accompanies it (Dejours, 2014:124).

Contribution to the division of labour is a nuanced and contestable norm. It can be delineated in relation to the level of responsibility demanded by an occupation and in terms of the essentiality of the service

provided. For example, leaving aside levels of achievement and qualifications for the moment, it can be argued that nurses, doctors, carers and cleaners all make an essential contribution to services for the aged. But whereas the contribution of nurses is usually appreciated and that of doctors highly esteemed, the essential services provided by residential carers and cleaners usually receive scant authentic esteem recognition, including in terms of wages, and can in fact attract injurious misrecognition as claimed by Maria earlier. This topic will be taken up in a later section.

In this regard, we return to Mary. During an earlier conversation, she had fiercely defended Pacific Islanders' contribution to the social exchange of labour by "taking on the jobs nobody else wants". Claiming that semi-skilled labour, 'cleaning, care work and the like' matters as much as higher status occupations because they are necessary for society's functioning, 'somebody has to do them', she professes to admire Pacific Islanders for their contributions through such work. Her defensive response seems to be aimed at rehabilitating a moral recognition space, in this case the claiming of social esteem for contribution to the division of labour through the idea of socially essential tasks. However, in her choice of words in the later interview regarding Pacific Island school leavers considering themselves "not good for anything else, anything that matters", Mary unwittingly demotes the contribution of workers in those same low-status occupations. This contradictory stance, of which Mary appears unaware, highlights the complex recognition dilemmas inherent in the lived reality of occupational stratification for groups and individuals employed in low-prestige jobs. It illustrates the way in which domination 'seeps into the symbolic order' and shapes the frames of discourse and experience regarding the contribution made by different types of work (Anderson, 2000:7; Deranty, 2009a:327). Ben's 'doctors and lawyers at the top' comparison, alluded to by some of the other participants, is also illustrative of the internalisation of the established occupational recognition order and its prejudicial values.

Some of the other participants' reflections reveal a similar uneasy juxtaposition between admiration and denigration, this time in relation to the norm of achievement. For example, recognition narrative and counter-narrative are discernible in at least four excerpts. Both Ben and

Sonny name Pacifica cultural traits and achievements, such as music, dance and sports, that are highly respected in Australia, even while they complain that Pacific Islanders are seen as ‘only good’ for low-status work and compare Pacifica people’s accomplishments unfavourably against the achievements of those in high-status sectors. In expressing frustration regarding the ethno-racial stereotyping of their employment, Mary derisively dismisses the attributes with which Pacific Islanders can gain a significant measure of social regard: “Yeah, Pacific Islanders are good at culture and physical (activities), sports and the like”. And Maria’s earlier fiery denigration claims contain a counter shadow of ethnic pride and, as noted in Chapter [Five](#), restorative moral superiority, ‘the hard working labourers and factory hands from the Islands doing the Aussies’ work for them’.

Here is job placement consultant Patsy again, commenting on the specific requests she does receive for Pacific Island workers. In attempting to address the commonly held ascendancy of intellectual achievement over bodily prowess, she both appreciates and downplays Pacific Islanders’ achievement and contribution in fields of traditional superiority.

I think at the moment Western society sees a lot of our sporting achievements. They see our skills to do with singing and dancing. They don't necessarily see a lot about (our) academic achievements. ... What I see is, I get a lot of requests for choir, church choir, dance groups or connections for (Pacific Islands) sporting people, from people who are raising money in (and) need to draw crowds and things like that. I don't see much of requests for our academic achievements. And that's like, we are just not these people that sing and dance in front of you and (who) can run really fast or (who are) really good footie (football) players. It's as though that's all we're good for. There is a lot more to us, including our culture.

A conversation during the morning tea break at a community forum succinctly captures this ambiguous juxtaposition of recognition and mis-recognition in relation to accomplishment and occupational status. In this excerpt, a group of Pacific Islanders are responding to inquiries from a visiting presenter regarding the employment trends of Pacifica school leavers in the locality.

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Valerie (pastor): Lots of our young men get jobs as bouncers cause they're big and strong.

James (educational liaison officer): Yeah, our boys are big, lots of muscle.

John (youth worker, previously a bouncer): Yeah, we're the muscle (giggles).

Ian (fellow youth worker): Needs brawn not brains (laughs, followed by group laughter).

The complex blend of recognition narrative and counter-narrative in the excerpts above can be understood through notions of racialised natural abilities. While members of ethno-racial groups, such as the Pacifica group, can and do take pride in certain qualities for which they are valorised, the idea of racialised natural ability can also serve to rationalise unequal racial and ethnic occupational formations (Hartmann, 2012:1008). Thus the recognition of Pacifica people's superior accomplishments, for example, in physical fields and sport, may symbolically reinforce rather than unsettle assumptions about inherent inferiority in other fields, such as academic and professional arenas that probably matter more on the symbolic scale. Images of the muscled and toned Brown or Black body that can 'run really fast' and perform with flair are then understood in essentialised biological terms that reinforce myths of 'racial genes' and 'the noble savage' (Hoxie, 2003; Senft, 1998; Tatz & Adair, 2009:4; Te'evale, 2001:223–225). Moreover, through Western culture's persistent mind-body dualism, athletic prowess can come to be "inversely associated with intellectual and/or moral excellence" (Hartmann, 2000:237 citing Hoberman, 1997), thus reinforcing ethno-racial difference and misrecognition as it manifests in the boundaries between intellectual and bodily labour.

The valorisation of racialised 'bodily capital' in the sporting arena (Wacquant, 1995:66) thus extends to the perception of Pacific Island men as 'naturally built' for the heavy labour, removalist, baggage handling and security sectors, as well as for the 'criminal workforce': "He just a big thug and that's all he's going to be". Australian radio talkback broadcaster Alan Jones provided an example of this popular sentiment during the lead up to the 2005 riots at Cronulla Beach in Sydney. Jones replied thus to a caller, Charlie, who had suggested that junior footballers gather at Cronulla Beach to 'take on' the immigrant presence: "I tell you who we want to

encourage, Charlie, all the Pacific Island people because, you want to know something, they don't take any nonsense. They are proud to be here—all those Samoans and Fijians. They love being here. And they say “Uh huh, uh huh. You step out of line, look out”” (Marr, 2005). Chris, a Polynesian school liaison officer, reflects ruefully on the way in which he and his brothers established just such a tough reputation through superior physicality at school. His words remind us of the image presented in Chapter [Two](#), the ‘protest masculinity’ (Noble, 2007:334) asserted by Pacifica youth regarding what they perceive to be a lack of respect and recognition, and a claim for such through a spectacle of physical threat.

Being a (migrant) minority, we (my brothers and I) had to establish our identity, who we were, and we established it through being the big tough guys of the school and fighting. So everyone would go, “So these are the (surname) boys? Don't mess with them. You gonna mess with them, you're gonna get the bash”. It's still the same cycle, hasn't been broken.

In a small digression here, it is worth noting that Chris' observation harks back to Maria's assertion in Chapter [Five](#) regarding the need to ‘respect oneself’. Again, we can see that Chris and his brothers do not lack modes of self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem, having developed such resources from specific interactions involving endorsing forms of recognition in various life contexts. In the negotiation of multi-ethnic school-yard politics, they utilise these forms of positive self-relations to assert their identities and generate a workable ‘tough boy’ reputation. This understanding again serves to highlight the multidimensionality of processes of intersubjective recognition in Honneth's model, the complexity of the ways in which recognition relations impact negatively and positively on identity and self-relations throughout an individual's life.

The concept of an ethno-racial natural ability, when it serves to entrench existing occupational misrecognition, is also reproduced through cultural consumption. In the music industry, such ‘absolutist stereotypes’ (Hyder, 2004:14 citing Gilroy, 1993:35; Radano & Bohlman, 2000:43) include the motif of the friendly, laidback, guitar-strumming Pacific Islander captured in Ben's image and Patsy's comment, “these people that sing and dance in front of you”. Relatedly, the idealised notion of

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the comforting, motherly Christian Islander (Sua'ali'i, 2001:168), is prevalent in care work. Pacifica Sarah, a retired nurse now working as a church volunteer, captures something of this perception in explaining the recognition that she received in her nursing role, a recognition that she holds dear to her heart. She expresses it in terms of admiration for her contribution to patient care that went beyond the call of duty and well beyond the call of pay.

Yeah, well, what (when) I came to this country (Australia) you know, (it was) my everything. I work hard in the hospital. I really like (working there). I don't work for money. I really want to work for the Lord, you know, and its goes to the patient that I work for (through Christian caring). You know, and I was, I was really missed by the hospital in that way when I retired. Everybody was crying. ... Actually every work I went (to) they admired how the Islanders work. In everything. It's not only the nurses but anywhere, (any) job. Sometimes they said you're stupid. You should work, like, according to your hour (rostered hours) and according to the money (pay) they gave. You were stupid people to care that much, hard work and work that hard (laughs).

The limiting consequences of the perception of racialised natural abilities help to illuminate the juxtaposition of admiration and denigration in some of the participant transcripts presented in this section. Positive ethnic self-identification and the social esteem awarded for accomplishment in specialist fields, such as sport and music, are valued (Hyder, 2004:140; Zemke-White, 2001:228). However, that valuing is undermined by the inference that racialised abilities fail to transfer to other occupations that require different aptitudes and sets of skills and greater levels of responsibility. Or if Pacific Islanders do attain higher status employment, it is more likely to be in the role of the less valued aide, as Susan succinctly summarised earlier. In terms of the norm of achievement in paid work, valuation takes account of time and effort spent in gaining qualifications, the level of skill attained, the realisation of personal and professional traits to do the job effectively, on-the-job experience and accomplishment, which is usually reflected in variable pay rates. But Susan demonstrates that a focus on the comparative status of work, 'nurse aide *not* the nurse, teacher aide *not* the

teacher', tends to negate the relative achievements of those attaining such levels of employment and the worthiness of the contribution such aide work makes to the social good.

In other words, the theme of subjective and collective denigration confronts us with a paradox that compounds the misrecognition of Pacific Islanders' occupational strengths. It could be termed self-misrecognition arising from social misrecognition. The ability to experience the positive social regard that is attributed for achievement and contribution is eroded by the veiled perception, 'but that's all we're good for'. Thus somewhat 'boxed in', participant responses reveal a certain bitterness or ironic stance, a sometime self-disparaging dismissal of individual and cultural achievement. Or, as noticeable in Susan's playful derision of work accomplishments and in the 'brawn not brains' excerpt, the reaction is expressed as ethnically oriented self-deprecating humour. Self-prejudicial 'ethnic humour' has many complex purposes, including as a perverse way of countering or tempering disparaging representations, of building solidarity and of asserting positive ethnic identity (Cundall, 2012; Leveen, 1996:30; Lowe, 1986:439/453; Omotayo, 2011:137). In the two narratives above, it is comprehensible as an intelligent rehabilitative response to the deleterious effects of occupation-related degradation.

But self-mockery can have a somewhat hollow ring. Below the social dynamics of the 'brawn not brains' interaction, and hidden by laughter, are surmised deep-seated injuries. These injuries are sustained through the low status of the occupational identities often inhabited by Pacific Islanders, a devaluation of their achievements and contributions in those occupations and, perversely, the ambiguous valorisation of ethno-racial natural ability that continues to shape the racial division of labour. Described at the beginning of the chapter, Honneth's three critical conceptions and developments of them by recognition and work scholars identify social esteem recognition of occupational contribution, achievement and performance as consequential in terms of worker self-esteem, self-development and autonomy. Eroding these norms in complex ways, occupational misrecognition seems to go to the heart of exclusion in intercultural relations of recognition regarding 'what Pacific Islanders do for work'.

Occupational Misrecognition and Community Disadvantage

The research on which this book is based suggests a link between Pacifica workers' over-representation in racialised low-status employment sectors and community disadvantage. As an influential community worker, Mary expresses herself with intensity on this topic many times during the course of fieldwork, in both private and public forums. Multiple complex factors can contribute to a diaspora community's disaffection in Australia (see, e.g., Hage, 1998, 2003; Harris, A., 2010, Noble, 2005, 2007, 2009d; Noble & Poynting, 2010; Stratton, 2006; Wise, 2009b, 2010; Wise & Velayutham, 2009b). However, specifically regarding the Pacifica diaspora, Mary makes a specific connection between Pacific Island youth, occupational opportunity and the experience of alienation.

Or, or they (our young people) just don't care (about getting a job). They're unemployed (shrugs shoulders). They're on the streets, drinking, taking drugs, getting into trouble and the like. ... You should come (at) night, see what I mean. Some of our youth workers ... and (some of our) elders too, patrol at night, try to redirect them (troubled youth). You know, talk to them, get them home. ... Some (of the street youth are) still at school but you can see them going the same way (into low-skilled jobs, unemployment or criminality). We (the Pacific Islands community) have one of the highest Juvenile Justice (incarceration) rates in the state.

Mary's assertion regarding Pacific Island young people's poor occupational performance is supported by statistical evidence. Table 6.2 shows the occupational distribution of Polynesian school leavers in Australia across 20 years. Despite a trend towards greater participation in the professional, technical, trades and services sectors, young Pacifica workers remain over-represented in low-status jobs such as labouring and machine operating.

Local community disadvantage, a sense of fragmentation within the Pacific Islands diaspora and the diaspora's limited integration within Australian society, is deeply troubling to many of the Pacific Islanders who were encountered during fieldwork. Indeed, Pacifica organisations have emerged to specifically address issues of fragmentation. As revealed

Table 6.2 The Occupational Distribution of Polynesians Who Left School Less Than Ten Years Ago 1991–2011

	1991		2001		2011	
	Persons of Polynesian Birthplace	Total Population	Persons of Polynesian Ancestry	Total Population	Persons of Polynesian Ancestry	Total Population
Percentages						
Managers and Administrators	0.66	3.06	1.12	2.24	1.66	4.07
Professionals	0.83	7.14	3.25	10.75	3.07	12.53
Para- or Associate Professionals	2.26	4.17	4.33	6.78	—	—
Trades Workers and Technicians	3.63	12.69	4.74	10.35	5.89	12.15
Clerical, Administrative, Community and Personal Service Workers	10.18	26.2	23.48	27.68	24.62	30.34
Machine Operators, Production and Transport Workers	8.75	3.00	9.85	3.96	11.18	2.80
Labourers and Related Workers	18.00	8.09	10.52	5.54	11.66	6.39
Inadequately Described or not Stated	6.38	3.90	2.04	1.22	2.1	1.22
Total Employed	50.69	68.24	59.35	68.51	60.17	69.49
Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)						

Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)

through participant observation at some of these organisations' meetings, public forums and seminars, as well as during interviews and informal conversations with leaders, pastors, social workers, police officers, teachers, church volunteers, youth workers, young people and other participants, there seems to be broad agreement that social alienation in the Pacific Islands diaspora is expressed through educational under-achievement, under-employment, unemployment, significant family disintegration especially as it relates to the conflicting generational expectations involved in status and class mobility (Bedford et al., 2001:11–12; Bottomley, 1991:99; Colombo, 2010:459–467; Horton, 2012; Lee, 2007, 2011), domestic violence and youth criminality particularly in terms of gang crime, vandalism and drug abuse. Another very real issue is youth suicide, to which a number of respondents alluded with hushed and deeply felt concern. Below, the Reverend Bill makes a connection between educational under-achievement, low-status occupations and disaffection in his pastoral work with young Pacific islanders and their families.

Well, my perception is that more of our young people are leaving school with qualifications or gaining some sort of (post-school) qualification than before. Quite a few go (on from school) to TAFE courses, you know, youth work, social services, justice, um security's a big one, that sort of thing. But I don't see much coming from that yet. A lot still seem to be getting the same shit jobs, excuse my language (laughs). Or otherwise they're out of work, or in and out, you know, of employment. ... They get into gangs (and) you know, crime, drugs, alcohol, the whole gambit. Are you aware that we (Pacific Islanders) are over-represented here in Australia in the crime stats (and) also in domestic violence? ... I pick up a sense of hopelessness sometimes, you know, from our young people, when I visit the Juvenile Justice facilities (youth detention). It's quite disturbing. It's something I pray about quite often actually.

Reverend Bill's perceptions are borne out by statistical evidence as well. Table 6.3 shows that Polynesian school leavers lag behind the total population in terms of post-school educational attainment. While there is some small improvement between 1991 and 2011, it has not kept pace with the population as a whole. Indeed, the gap between Polynesian and other school leavers has widened in terms of the attainment of post-school qualifications. Elizabeth, a young second-generation Polynesian employed in a

Table 6.3 The Post-School Educational Attainment of Polynesians Who Left School Less Than Ten Years Ago 1991–2011

	1991		2001		2011	
	Persons of Polynesian Birthplace	Total Population	Persons of Polynesian Ancestry	Total Population	Persons of Polynesian Ancestry	Total Population
Percentage with Post-school Qualifications	23.48	33.45	26.23	38.77	29.89	47.28
Percentage with no Post-school Qualifications	76.52	66.55	73.77	61.23	70.11	52.72

Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)

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responsible government position, candidly shares her reflections as she compares her and her brother's employment trajectories.

Well, yes, I do have this good job. I did well at school and my family's proud of me having this job. ... But for my younger brother, it's a different story. He's in a gang. My parents are ashamed (of him). He came over (from the islands) and my older brother got him a job as a baggage handler. But he was bored. (He said) not enough money. I think he felt, what is the word, bad about (demeaned by) that position. So he joined up with a gang. He got respect there, and (more) money. You know the expression 'street cred'? Well, that's what it means, respect (in the neighbourhood from fellow gang members). He's in jail now. But he doesn't care. Well he says he doesn't, 'cause it's all about getting respect from the bros (gang members). Do you get what I'm saying?

John, the Polynesian youth worker quoted earlier, works as a volunteer for a church organisation formed to engage with and redirect disaffected Pacifica young people.

Yeah, we have a major problem for (with) our young people. We patrol the streets on (some) nights. We talk to them (Pacifica youth), try to stop them drinking and the drugs, get (getting) into trouble with the police. ... We're looking to get them working and back into the church, doing something productive with their lives. Trouble is, they don't have much in the way of qualifications, so the jobs they can get aren't flash. ... They don't care (about the job), something happens, they (leave and go) back on the streets again. ... We work with the police but I think we need to be doing more in the way of training. You know, like get to them in the schools and (encourage them to) get some qualifications before they leave (school).

From these narratives, one gains a sense of alienation especially regarding Pacific Islands young people and their approach to education and employment. This is, of course, not the case for all Pacifica youth, as Elizabeth herself exemplifies. Moreover, low expectation of achieving high occupational status is but one of a complex set of factors contributing to educational under-achievement and job market disaffection (see Connell et al., 1982; Noble & Watkins, 2009; Watkins & Noble, 2008; Willis, 1977). However, when one understands oneself as a member of a collective who

tend towards 'the non-flash jobs', a pervasive sense of estrangement emerges for many. It seems, too, that when one has only the hope of 'a shit job', the tendency might be to abandon the expectation of mainstream social recognition altogether. As Elizabeth is keen to emphasise regarding her brother, "Do you get what I'm saying", esteem for achievement and contribution through work is then sought from alternative recognition audiences such as the criminal and drug subcultures (Collins et al., 2000:160–170). From her brother's perspective, the gang as a 'counterculture of respect' (Sennett & Cobb, 1972:79–89) may well provide a valid form of work, carrying legitimate occupational status through the provision of a regular job, wages and desired recognition. One then 'gets respect' from peers and bosses and gains recognition of performance, contribution accomplishment as they are prescribed in this alternative underworld culture. This analysis resonates with Bourgois' well-known study of street drug dealers seeking esteem and respect in a marginalised inner city neighbourhood of New York (Bourgois, 2003). Indeed, Honneth (2012e:206) notes that when subjects are denied recognition in the mainstream culture, they may turn to social groups that can offer compensatory forms of recognition through "group-specific codes of responsibility and respect".

The theme of disadvantage amongst the Pacific Islands diaspora emerges repeatedly during fieldwork. It seems to reflect a deep thirst for increased social esteem recognition to address what one informant names 'the shame of being seen as a problem migrant group in Australia'. Research participants are as one voice in proposing educational and vocational advancement as a major means of addressing fragmentation, especially as it relates to Pacifica youth. This is to identify a solution to disintegrative tendencies through the development of upward mobility in the occupational order, whereby greater social esteem recognition is facilitated through higher status work and better pay rates. In discussing this way forward, Mary acknowledges that individual movement up the employment ladder will not necessarily 'cure' a sense of community disintegration. She acknowledges that 'not all Pacific Islanders can become doctors, lawyers and teachers' and that many migrants will continue in low-status employment. But she argues that a large measure of societal respect for the paid work of Pacific Islanders in Australia, currently miss-

ing in her view, will be secured when representational equity across the occupational landscape is improved.

However, in the pressure to 'catch up' with the Australian educational and occupational mainstream and negate the reputation of problem diaspora, Pacifica people may overlook a cultural repertoire that is highly valued in the diaspora. First discussed in the preceding chapter and to be further pursued in the next chapter, there seems to be a specific sense of work as social contribution, beyond gainful employment, that is particularly visible during fieldwork. Members of community organisations and churches, and many others, contribute significant voluntary efforts to alleviate community disadvantage and promote social integration. Moreover, many Pacific Islanders gainfully employed in human services work use the skills developed in those contexts to contribute significantly to this voluntary effort to 'care for the community to make the community work'.

Indeed, the importance many Pacific Islanders, as members of an ethnic minority group in Australia, attach to caring for their community is reflected in research. For example, Canadian researchers Ng and Sears (2010) reveal stronger altruistic and social values among ethnic minorities compared with majority Whites. In similar vein in the United States, Lamont (2000:20–21/47) finds that whereas White workers place a premium on a disciplined self, Black workers most value the collective dimensions of morality, 'a caring self' who values communality, connection, generosity and solidarity. In her view, this stronger sense of the imagined collective community is based on "shared historical experience and the continued impact of their common racial identity on their fate and life chances", that "what's good for my race is good for me" (Lamont, 2000:48–49).

This section of the chapter has demonstrated ways in which Pacifica workers typically experience social devaluation related to the group's overrepresentation in racialised low-status occupational sectors, the corrosive effects on the norms of work and the disintegrative consequences for the diaspora. But as well, it has highlighted a counter-narrative of recognition regarding the essential social value of low-status occupations, the ambiguous valorisation of racialised natural abilities and a cultural repertoire of work as social contribution beyond gainful employment, which mixes in contradictory ways with the narrative of misrecognition. A similar com-

plex blend of esteem recognition and misrecognition emerges in the following section, which brings into focus the tasks undertaken in the low-status occupations inhabited by many Pacific Island workers.

Occupational Tasks and Esteem Recognition

The first part of this chapter argued that through their perceived and actual association with low-status, poorly remunerated racialised occupations, Pacific Islanders' experience is largely one of misrecognition regarding 'what they do for work', although this picture is complicated by a contradictory blend of recognition and misrecognition also identified amongst the participants. This next part of the chapter focuses on intercultural (mis)recognition as it relates to the concrete tasks and responsibilities required of many low-status occupations. For example, domestic work, care work and cleaning include manual or menial tasks that require workers to deal with bodily materiality and human waste while manufacturing, warehousing, security, heavy labouring, baggage handling and removal work involve physical toil and tedious repetition. As with the previous section, critical analysis will be linked to esteem recognition and misrecognition regarding the norms of achievement, contribution and performance including the expressive, autonomous, co-operative aspects of working activity. To develop this theme, the section focuses on John and Ian, the young Polynesian 'bouncers'-turned youth workers, on retired Polynesian worker Robert who was employed as a cleaner for many years and on aged care worker Maria, whose experiences and opinions have already provided a rich source of empirical material in previous analyses.

Ian and John: 'We're The Muscle, Needs Brawn Not Brains'

In a discussion in the previous section of the chapter, the recognition of Pacifica people's bodily capital was conceived of as 'naturally limiting' a great deal of their workforce participation to heavy labouring jobs. John's observation, "We're the muscle", highlights the nature of such activity, the way that it requires of the worker physical exertion and bodily muscularity. There is no doubt that bodily strength and brute force can attract

social recognition, particularly as it translates into sporting realms or is admired by peers in labouring industries. But with his humorous quip, "Needs brawn not brains", Ian succinctly captures something of the wider disparagement that tends to attach to semi-skilled labouring occupations in comparison to the social esteem that is forthcoming for more highly skilled, intellectual or 'light work' sectors.

Some of the other Pacific Islanders quoted in the previous section perceive such occupational activity in a similar light. For example, Elizabeth's "I think he felt, what is the word, bad about that position" is understood to mean that her brother felt demeaned, possibly ashamed, to be handling baggage. In his view, as well as being boring it attracted minimal wages and more importantly it seems, little esteem. While a complexity of motivations must be acknowledged, John's and Ian's self-deprecating laughter can be understood as a way of coping with the sense of devaluation and alienation that attaches to low-skilled activity because of physical suitability, 'big, strong, lots of muscle', in a society where brain nearly always trumps brawn under the dominant value discourse.

Prejudicial values regarding semi-skilled labouring activity challenge, to some extent at least, the sense of dignity, achievement and contribution of the social subjects employed to carry it out. Such manual work tends to be downgraded in the sense that it presupposes "a strong evaluative contrast" between employment that is purposeful, gratifying, meaningful and well-suited to the worker and employment that is not (Smith, 2009:47). In other words, the activities required of much manual work, where Pacifica people frequently cluster, can often be considered inconsequential in terms of its self-transforming possibilities (Dejours, 2014) compared to employment that requires higher-level skills. Moreover, the concrete manual tasks involved in the performance of care work and cleaning tend to be further relegated through their link to bodily materiality, a subject that will be addressed in the following section.

However, the tasks required of low-status occupations can potentially be the source of recognition at work. This argument raises the notion of 'craftsmanship' which Sennett (2006:103–105/194) defines in contemporary times as "the desire to do something well for its own sake". He describes research in which poorly paid and often abused Black cleaners "salvaged some fragments of self-worth" in satisfying themselves that a

house was well-cleaned, and ill-respected junior members of family bakery businesses took pride in producing good bread despite rough treatment, and concludes that “the more one understands how to do something well, the more one cares about it”. Similarly, in research with working-class men, Lamont (2000:26) discovered the so-called unskilled and semi-skilled workplace as a context in which workers are able to and do display competence. Such work activity provides the occasion to master skills, particularly skills that involve increasing control and speed with tools and machines, all of which can engender esteem recognition and thus a sense of achievement, autonomy and pride in the tasks of low-status occupations.

These research findings resonate with Honneth’s first critical conception, and developments of it by recognition and work theorists, regarding recognition of the performance and product of working activity. This theme will be addressed more fully, and with substantial empirical samples, in Chapter [Seven](#). But to elaborate it briefly here, there is an unofficial side to workplace life, not usually seen by authority personnel, where pragmatic practices are established that often depart “in subtle yet vital ways” from the formal procedures inscribed in employee handbooks (Vallas, 2012:6). These pragmatic practices, requiring the worker’s commitment and practical intelligence, are usually aimed at addressing workplace contingencies and bridging discrepancies between the prescription of a task and its successful completion (Dejours, 2007:72/82; Smith & Deranty, 2012a:59). For example, cleaners, factory hands, baggage handlers, heavy labourers, security guards, waitresses and care workers daily ‘direct themselves’ in accommodating contradictory job descriptions, overly complex management directives and impossible timeframes. Or workers may invent ways to complete complicated technological tasks and adroitly manage delicate relational dynamics (Rose, 2004; Svendsen, 2008:42). If awarded social esteem, especially by work colleagues, these intelligent pragmatic adaptations in their various formulations can constitute the source of self-esteem and self-development through the activity of work itself.

In this regard, John’s insights into his work are illustrative. John explains during an interview that he left his security job due to “having to stand around outside nightclubs and bars for long periods of time”. However,

there were for him enjoyable self-enhancing aspects of the job as well. He seems to have found pleasure in the challenge of competently managing “tanked up patrons” and de-escalating troublesome encounters. Going well beyond the basic training provided by his employers, he claims to have developed his own unique ways of handling these potentially explosive situations, in other words bridging the gap between job prescription and job realisation (Dejours, 2007:72/82), that reflected his Christian beliefs and involved a co-operative relationship with fellow workers. Indeed John, appearing to be something of a role model, claims that his inventive practices were copied by work mates. In this regard, Dejours (2014:124) argues that peer judgement is “the most precise, the most subtle, the most severe and the most precious” type of recognition of work activity. Along with his physical prowess and fitness, the skills or ‘craftsmanship’ (Sennett, 2006:195–196) developed in this work are obviously the source of agency, achievement and pride for John and seem to have transferred seamlessly into his current youth work activities, particularly in regard to night patrols of the local town centre. The issue here is that most members of the public are likely to perceive security work as involving relatively little complexity and skill. Thus John’s commitment, practical intelligence and pragmatic adaptations as a ‘nightclub bouncer’, although admired by peers, are barely recognised less esteemed outside that occupational sector.

Robert: ‘Clean The Toilets, Clean The Platform’

During an interview Lucy, a Polynesian woman, relates the following story regarding her husband’s bid to gain employment after their arrival in Australia as migrants. The original excerpt is much longer, an extended retelling which seems to bring therapeutic benefits for the teller. It is reduced to its bare bones here using ellipses.

(Before we came to Australia) he (Lucy’s husband Robert) was doing all this stuff. We run a business ... and then we came here and I thought, my gosh, now we’re not ready to go. Hard for us. ... My gosh, not (no) qualifications. Even doctor from Indian, teachers from overseas, doing cleaning just to survive. My gosh, but we want to make good, you know (work and) not have the hand-out ... be the citizen, pay the tax. ... So then he decided ... he was going to get training, skill up himself. So he went (for employment training through a

Pacific Island contact). So then he rang and asked to see (if) there's a job, a government job. Railway, I think. (He was told) you really need to go for this one, revenue protection or something. ... And he went to an interview and first interview, 30 people or 20 people. ... We were shocked when we saw the queue, my gosh. ... And they rang after three days. He was unsuccessful but his name is still up there. ... I think he was in the top 50 or whatever. So, then, my gosh, we have to wait next three or four weeks. He's got a call that he has an interview for 15 or 13 jobs. ... He's got it! Ever since that, that was his job until he retired. But he was funny, my gosh, because he got all this stuff, new suits, tie and all. He went on the first day. ... He was wearing this suit, tie, all this stuff. He went there and he was told, orientation, all this stuff, him and the other (new workers). What they need to do is (to) clean the toilets, clean the platforms (laughs). And he was laughing! They (Robert and co-workers) laugh about it ... He's got used to it. He's liking working with the others (co-workers). ... But (he) still tells the story. Because we thought (they were being employed as) state revenue protection people and now they being told ok, your chores today was to clean the toilets, clean the platform, clean the windows and all that stuff. They didn't know, oh my gosh, you're a cleaner (laughs). It was an open-eye for him. It was almost like a setback.

Lucy's story is striking for the sense of pathos concealed beneath the self-deprecating humour with which it is delivered. One gains a real sense of the bewilderment of this husband and wife team as they experience their drop in occupational status from small business owner-operators in their Pacific homeland to his employment in Australia as a train station cleaner. They appear motivated by a strong desire to improve their life situation, to be good migrants and to contribute. Knowing that he holds few useful qualifications by Australian standards, Robert seeks training to improve his chances in the job market.

The theme of misrecognition regarding low occupational status, as addressed in the first section of this chapter, is clearly visible in this narrative. However, it is the depreciation of the concrete tasks associated with low-status occupations on which this analysis will focus. In the mind's eye we can see Lucy's husband, Robert, carefully dressed in suit and tie, reporting for duty on his first day. With 'up-skilling' completed and in expectation of what he understands to be an important position as a revenue protection officer, he discovers the actuality of the job. One of

a number of the new intake beginning that day, he is to be a train station cleaner. Robert's sense of shock and setback, his 'open-eye', is palatable. Among other themes, it speaks of the ignominy associated with the 'dirty work' of cleaning public places, especially public toilets. But in her expression, "it was almost like a setback", Lucy indicates that despite an initial sense of affronted personal dignity and ambivalence, her husband did take the job. Now retired, Robert continues to tell the story, which may indicate perhaps that at a deeper psychological level the experience remains somewhat unresolved for him.

The sense of indignation or ambivalence may arise from the fact that dirty work associates the worker with bodily materiality. Smith and Deranty (2012b:3) note the way in which human societies are almost universally characterised by a hierarchy of social functions that parallels "the level of engagement with materiality, where bodily materiality is usually the lowest level". Hughes (1958:49–53, 1962) developed the specific sociological notion of dirty work, proposing that its relegation to the lower occupational levels is a common social characteristic and part of the process of occupational mobility. Moreover, socially devalued tasks such as cleaning highlight the fact that, as well as technical and social aspects, the division of labour has moral and psychological dimensions (Molinier, 2012:251–252 citing Lhuillier, 2005:73–98). The material conditions of dirty work carry negative psychological impacts for workers, related to invisibility and defilement that may significantly erode any sense of achievement, contribution or meaningful performance attached to such occupational tasks.

Indeed, cleaners and their cleaning tasks remain largely invisible and unrecognised in the public landscape. Domestic cleaning is carried out in private households while many public spaces are often cleaned at night when users are not present (Coyle, 1985:7). Social subjects usually take the cleanliness of such spaces for granted, only pausing to reflect on the labouring process that goes into maintaining them as clean when something has not been cleaned (Herod & Aguiar, 2006:3). Hence cleaners come into view through dirt's visibility, cementing a type of psychological contamination. Moreover, in cleaning public spaces and toilets, workers such as Robert inevitably encounter and dispose of bodily detritus and human waste as an everyday occupational task. In the social imaginary,

such tasks engender aversion because they confront the impure and potentially shameful dimensions of humanity. Proximity to “what is normally held at a distance” is perceived, to some extent at least, as defiling those individuals who undertake such activities (Molinier, 2012:252 Hughes, 1958, 1962). Thus, in being employed to do the dirty work, cleaners carry the shame of ‘dirt’s stigma’ for the social body (Anderson, 2000:1/142; Wolkowitz, 2006:155).

Furthermore, such workers can be understood as ‘metaphorically racialised’ by their link to dirt, intensifying the phenomenon, whereby contemporary cleaning is disproportionately performed by racialised groups from low-income countries (Glenn, 1992:19–20; Herod & Aguiar, 2006:7; Huang et al., 2012:195; Molinier, 2012:251; Palmer, 1989:139–144). Migrant workers at this bottom end of the racial division of labour, though engaged in socially essential work as Mary noted earlier, carry, to some extent at least, the discomfiture of contaminating work activity. To reply to the ‘So what do you do for a living?’ query with ‘I’m a cleaner’, is to risk social shame or embarrassment. As Lucy notes, in the common imaginary one does cleaning not as a career choice but “just to survive”. Self-disparaging humour to cope with the associated social humiliation and to rehabilitate some sense of self-esteem and self-respect, noticeable in earlier participant excerpts, emerges in Lucy’s story as well.

Lucy could not remember her husband’s official job title but she was sure that it did not contain the term ‘cleaner’. Associated with the global trend to professionalise and ‘scientise’ the cleaning industry, there is a growing tendency for people who work as cleaners to be ascribed alternative titles, such as ‘sanitation engineer’ or ‘general maintenance officer’, that mask potentially demeaning work (Herod & Aguiar, 2006:4–7). On one reading, these obfuscating job descriptors confirm the common preference for keeping the discomforting and unsanitary aspects of bodily materiality out of sight. However, self-serving scientific management and work intensification agendas notwithstanding (Aguiar, 2001), the renaming mechanism also aims, in theory at least, to raise the status of the cleaning task and thus re-validate the cleaners’ contribution to the social division of labour.

There is a sense in which Robert’s job may have fulfilled some of the norms of paid work. Lucy indicates that he stayed in this job until he

retired. On one reading this may indicate that although initially shocked at 'entering a menial occupation', he came to attach some sense of pride, purpose and commitment to his role as a train station cleaner. Aguiar (2001:263) notes "a discourse of pride and ownership" in her research amongst building cleaners, while Sennett (1998:16–17) describes a particular janitor encountered during fieldwork, whose development of self-respect and social honour indicated a sense of 'becoming the author of his own life'. Unfortunately, it was not possible to interview Robert himself. Thus we can only speculate on the way in which aspects of his occupational tasks might have played out for him in terms of the norms of work. Lucy's "He's got used to it. He's liking working with the others", and the fact that he still laughs about the experience with retired colleagues, could indicate that, beyond humour as a way of minimising stigma or shame attached to the activity of public cleaning, Robert locates particular positive significance and esteem in a sense of achievement, contribution, co-operative work and camaraderie among workmates.

Maria: 'Cleaning Up The Elderly Body'

In this final section, a small portion of aged care worker Maria's narrative is re-presented to build on this exploration of (mis)recognition and the norms of paid work in relation to concrete occupational tasks. This portion highlights the activity involved in care work.

You know, these Aussie elderlies. I'll look at them and think, excuse me you! ... Who is doing your care? You know, your own people won't even look after you, help clean you up. ... This black person here's the one that wipes your backside.

The work of care can entail an intensive level of subjective challenge, especially when it involves the direct management of the human body. In Maria's example, work tasks place her in an immediate and intimate relationship with bodily materiality because care involves the basic needs, personal comfort, hygiene and bodily wastes of the cared-for other (Molinier, 2012:252). The involuntary shiver that might occur when considering the reality of attending to some of these tasks can be understood as an expression of somatophobia. This powerful social force

encompasses negative affect projected towards human bodies and those of their functions that discomfort or repel. One of the Western origins of somatophobia can be traced to Victorian era upper- and middle-class obsession with dirt's elimination, which may have led to a simulated alienation from the body (Anderson, 2000:18/142 citing Davidoff, 1974). Aversion to unmentionable bodily functions and excretions can thus be projected onto those whose job it is to deal with them, exacerbating their sense of denigration. It is suggested that this social process, exacerbated by the limited recognition attributed to care work in capitalist societies (Gregoratto, 2016:57), erodes the ability of the care worker to maintain a sense of valued performance, achievement or worthwhile contribution through paid employment and its tasks.

Caring is typically regarded as low-status work because it combines an entrenched somatophobia with racial and gender divisions of labour. Such divisions are characterised by negative attitudes towards the least powerful members of society including migrants from the developing world, ethno-racial minorities and women in traditional male-dominated hierarchies (Anderson, 2000:1/9/142; Fine, 2007:145; Smith & Deranty, 2012b:3). As a Brown female immigrant from the Pacific Islands, Maria represents the archetypical worker in aged care, domestic care, nurse aiding and childcare in Western nations like Australia (Alexeyeff, 2008:138; Castles & Miller, 2009:34–35/173–174; Stevens et al., 2012:261). The intersection of race and gender and also class given that Maria is non-tertiary educated and exists in the nether regions of the socio-economic realm, exacerbates the devaluing of care work (Collins et al., 2000:111/122–125; Lamont & Molnár, 2002:176; McCall, 2001:7–8/58/87; Orme, 2009:72; Vasta, 1991:160–167/177). Furthermore, attention has been drawn to the feelings of power that workers, especially women workers, may feel 'flowing out from the self' as they provide care and intimate services to others (Wolkowitz, 2006:5 citing Bartky, 1990). If this is so, a diminished sense of personal power and dignity may be even more pronounced for care workers when racial, gender and class divisions of labour deepen social devaluation as they engage in the activity such service occupations require.

Maria's retelling of the 'Black bitch' story, originally discussed in Chapter Five, seemed to act as a catalyst for the fuller expression of offended dig-

nity regarding the racist disrespect targeted at her and her caring duties. It is significant that her chosen example of such duties involves toileting her elderly client, one of the more personally challenging of the carer's tasks. Maria views such tasks as the rightful responsibility of the gainfully employed aged care worker. Her attitude may also allude to aspects of a cultural repertoire of care as naturally owed to elders, from which she gains some measure of self-esteem and pride. Indeed, a counter-narrative of recognition alongside misrecognition emerges when Maria declares: "I don't mind cleaning up these elderlies. It's part and parcel of the (aged care) work". She speaks of her clients as vulnerable elderly people who need her care and for whom she will "go the extra mile", narrating in disparaging tones stories of colleagues who leave residents in a soiled state "for the next shift to deal with". It seems that, for Maria, an ambiguous sense of the 'moral high ground' is to be had from the performance of essential care work that goes largely unnoticed in the wider world, and this may act as a restorative strategy in the face of misrecognition.

Care work and its tasks may occupy a lowly position on the occupational ladder but nevertheless potentially fulfil norms from all three of Honneth's critical conceptions of paid work. While the industry requires limited formal qualifications, it does oblige an 'ethic of care' that includes skills, training, responsibilities and material effort (Anderson, 2000:3; Orme, 2009:72; Steinberg & Figart, 1999:23). Moreover the role of carer, properly embodied, requires of the worker 'emotional labour' (Hochschild, 2012:7), that is, emotional availability, ease with intimate procedures and compassionate concern within a system of interpersonal relationships. From the recognition perspective, we can understand this requirement as "a caring recognition of human beings' dependencies and vulnerabilities" that has traditionally been confined to Honneth's first sphere of love relations (Gregoratto, 2016:56). Certainly, Maria's narration above highlights the complex nature of paid care work, the way in which it involves the worker at a deeper level of subjectivity than much occupational activity. The maintenance of dignity, positivity and functionality in the relationship between carer and cared-for entails the ability to co-operate and to understand and communicate intangible and complex affective and cognitive elements (Fine, 2007:141/143). The care worker can thus gain a sense of satisfaction and contribution regarding

‘the obligation one owes others in the social exchange of labour’, a satisfaction that does indeed emerge in Maria’s attitude above. When socially recognised, care work can also facilitate a sense of purposeful achievement and performance, including aspects of self-expression, co-operation and self-direction.

Indeed, care work most certainly requires of the worker practical intelligence and self-direction to bridge what can at times be awkward gaps between the prescription of a job and its implementation (Dejours, 2007:72/82). As Maria intimates, the tasks of bodily care and the disposal of detritus require fluid negotiation because they are undertaken on and for a living human body in the presence of that living body’s consciousness. Moreover, workers motivated by a respect for the integrity of work systems and a desire to do their jobs well are likely to ‘go the extra mile’ despite inadequate management. This is Maria’s response to an apparent absence of management directives regarding a gap in service, when the aged clients are abandoned in a soiled state due to a changeover of staff. Given the invisibility or ‘casual non-recognition’ of her diligence, as well as her sense of the misrecognition attached to aged care, this response may be aimed at rehabilitating the norms of work. The ability to maintain a sense of achievement, contribution and satisfying performance regarding occupational activity, one that enhances self-esteem and thus self-realisation, is a challenge when social esteem recognition is minimal or absent. But a stance of commitment, moral purpose and pride can potentially restore, nourish and open up the transformative possibilities of paid work.

Conclusion

Chapter Six framed work experience as a social sphere in which (mis) recognition of the status of an occupation and its associated expectations, that is, ‘what one does for work’, occurs. Shaped by structural inequality and discourses reflecting dominant values, particularly regarding traditional divisions between mental and manual or skilled and semi-skilled employment, occupational stratification is a powerful social force that distorts cross-cultural recognition relations in Australia. The chapter has revealed some of this distortion through the erosion of norms located in

Honneth's three critical conceptions of paid work and developments of them by recognition and work theorists, specifically norms that have to do with esteem recognition of achievement, contribution including a reasonable rate of pay, and performance including the expressive, autonomous, co-operative aspects of working activity.

In this regard, research participants offered observation and experience of the widespread association of Pacific Islanders with low-status, poorly remunerated occupational sectors, an association that is compounded by the limitations of a racial division of labour and traditional symbolic servility. Analysis revealed complex recognition dilemmas, for example, an uneasy tension between admiration and denigration, inherent in the lived reality of occupational stratification for these mostly low-status workers from a minority cultural tradition. A recognition narrative is woven into job market participation in specific cases, facilitating pride in performance of occupational tasks that these workers know to attract limited social esteem. Overall though, misrecognition holds greater resonance, significantly eroding the sense of meaningful achievement and contribution, and the self-transformative possibilities of work. While authentic esteem recognition of cultural strengths and traits is appreciated, resulting pride is undermined by the inference that 'natural ability' fails to transfer to other, often higher status, occupations that demand different aptitudes, mental attitudes, specific skills and greater responsibility. Responses to this mode of self-misrecognition emerging from social misrecognition include irony, self-deprecating humour and moral claims regarding contribution. Importantly too, occupational devaluation is linked to educational under-achievement, employment limitation and disadvantage as an ingrained reality in the Pacifica diaspora.

The analysis developed in this chapter is not intended to support an idealistic argument against differentiated merit for occupational performance. As Honneth (2012c:133) himself recognises, the duration of preparation, degree of knowledge and skill and level of responsibility attached to a work role are legitimate and just arbiters of social recognition. However, a hierarchy of occupations is to some extent arbitrary, with various so-called manual jobs requiring a high level of practical intelligence, skill and experience that may outweigh in complexity some of the more valued occupations. More crucially, the social

definition of merit based on an occupational hierarchy must be questioned when powerful racialised structures and dominant discourses shape unequal access to the value horizon and the acquisition of traits required to build occupational capital, and thus the possibilities of self-esteem, self-realisation and autonomy for workers from minority cultural traditions.

Furthermore, the core issue of the social devaluation of certain work sectors remains unanswered by the educational and occupational advancement of minority groups. Beyond the rejection of ethnic and cultural stereotypes regarding aptitude, greater inclusion of alternative cultural traditions in the value horizon that interprets the meaning of worthwhile work is required, and this is especially so regarding what counts as essential contribution. Society's productive process is founded on an indispensable division of labour. Indeed, more important than low-wage income, a lack of symbolic valuation of reciprocal contribution to this exchange of labour emerges in the chapter's analysis as critical. As Mary so fiercely intimated, the division of labour places subjects in an interdependent relation in terms of the provision of goods and services that sustain all life. Devaluation is, then, doubly insulting because it erodes recognition of the contribution of those employed in low-status racialised occupations and thus weakens the social bonds facilitated through labour exchange, that is, Honneth's notion of social subjects who 'act for one another'. Chapter [Seven](#), the final empirical chapter in Part Two of the book, continues the theme of intercultural (mis)recognition, this time with the lens focused on 'how one practices at work'.

Chapter Seven

Everyday Intercultural (Mis)Recognition and 'How One Practises At Work'

The two preceding empirical chapters have focused on intercultural (mis) recognition at work regarding ethno-racial identification and in terms of the status of an occupation and its associated tasks. This chapter brings a critical lens to cross-cultural (mis)recognition implicit in 'how one practises at work', that is, the way in which workers engage with the concrete tasks as they are framed by the work organisation. Specifically, the analysis focuses on ethno-cultural difference as it shapes activities and practices in multicultural workplaces. It particularly utilises Honneth's premise of contested value horizon, that is, culturally differentiated interpretations of core values, to analyse participant experience as disputed practice, adaptive intervention and recognition struggle regarding best practice in cross-cultural work contexts. Elaborated below, the critical analysis of 'how one practices at work' is anchored in a reconstruction of Honneth's three critical conceptions, and thus esteem recognition in relation to the norms of performance, achievement and contribution in the domain of paid employment.

As with the previous two empirical categories, the theme of work practices emerged organically during fieldwork. Pacific Islanders, particularly those employed in human services institutions, revealed interwoven recognition and misrecognition narratives arising from different cultural perspectives regarding the implementation of work tasks. A complex

juxtaposition of cultural reproach and collective grievance emerged, with some participants noting the repercussions of contested practice and cultural bridging activity on the appraisal of work performance and promotion. These findings raise issues regarding cultural domination and marginalisation in the interpretation of the expectations of work organisations. They call for investigation into the ways in which minority ethnic workers negotiate practical and cultural disparities between job prescription and the realities of implementation, in terms of servicing diverse clientele groups. Exploration is also needed into specific cultural bridging activity, and the ways in which it is recognised and misrecognised as esteem worthy performance, achievement and contribution in paid employment. This chapter will investigate these important questions.

Chapter [Seven](#) is structured in five sections. The first section elaborates the critical conceptions, based on Honneth's writings, which anchor analysis of intercultural (mis)recognition regarding 'how one practises at work'. Four inter-related themes or analytical threads, materialising from analysis of work practices sourced in the fieldwork, constitute the next four sections of this chapter. The first theme focuses on disputed cultural perspectives regarding the efficacy of practice modes at work. Related to this, the following section addresses Pacifica workers' pragmatic adaptations regarding the bridging of practical and cultural disparities between a work organisation's expectations and job implementation. The next section concentrates on the juxtaposition of cultural culpability and collective grievance that emerges through the participants' narratives regarding intercultural bridging work. The final section encompasses the repercussions of contested transcultural practice for the (mis)recognition of job performance and promotion and relatedly, for a sense of collective injustice and recognition claims at work.

A Honneth-Based Critique of Intercultural (Mis)Recognition Regarding 'How One Practises At Work'

Chapter [Seven](#)'s analysis of (mis)recognition emergent in the concrete practices of multicultural workplaces, that is, in 'how one practises at work', draws resources from Honneth's first, second and third critical

conceptions of paid work and developments of them by recognition and work specialists, as they were delineated in Chapter [Four](#). These three conceptions identify the recognition of the performance and product of work practices, the social esteem recognition of individual achievement at work and the public recognition of contribution to the exchange of goods and services in society, as bearing crucial consequences for the possibilities of the self-esteem, self-realisation and autonomy of workers.

Honneth's first critical conception regarding the normative significance of the working activity itself (Honneth, 1995g) is particularly relevant for the category of 'how one practises at work'. The chapter's analysis draws specifically on this model, adding key insights from recognition and work theorists and from the field of the psychodynamics of work. From this perspective, work activities entail in varying degrees the opportunity for skill development, self-expression, self-direction and co-operation. Such development engenders specific psychological growth that, in turn, generates self-transformative possibilities, self-fulfilment and mental well-being. In other words, the performance of work entails formative and transformative dimensions that enable 'a work upon self', and this can be conceived of in at least two ways. The first aspect involves the self-development that comes from grappling with a job's challenges and initiating pragmatic adaptations to bridge the gap between the formal definition of the work task and its actual concrete realisation. The second aspect entails the development of self-esteem through the reception of esteem recognition regarding such performance. 'Insiders', namely, colleagues, managers, peers and others, ideally acknowledge the intelligence and creativity that have contributed to the accomplishment of the task to the standards defined by the profession, and thereby provide crucial symbolic rewards (Dejours, 2014:124). Together, these two aspects establish "an essential link for the sublimation of the work's challenges into a form of pleasure and subjective enhancement" (Dejours & Deranty, 2010:172). The norm of meaningful work resonates here as well, in that the skills and self-expressive, self-directive, co-operative qualities utilised are potentially 'full of meaning' for the workers involved.

The analytical category of work practices also draws on Honneth's second critical conception of paid work (Honneth, 1995f). Normative claims regarding the esteem recognition of achievement come into play

in the value horizon contestation over different cultural interpretations of best practice. In this regard, the achievement principle can be drawn upon to analyse the misrecognition of pragmatic practices undertaken by cross-cultural workers to bridge practical and cultural gaps between institutional expectations and their implementation. These practices are usually enacted informally, beyond the work organisation's formal job descriptions, and thus attract little performance recognition, promotion or extra remuneration.

Honneth's third critical conception regarding esteem recognition of contribution to the exchange of social services is also relevant in this regard (Honneth, 2010). The misrecognition or non-recognition of alternative cultural practices and the invisibility of intercultural bridging work potentially damage a worker's sense of reciprocal obligation and meaningfulness contribution to the social commons through work. Moreover, performance reviews which do not recognise alternative cultural practices can negatively impact remuneration and promotion.

The chapter's analysis of intercultural (mis)recognition implicit in 'how one practises at work' is grounded in these three critical conceptions. Critique is, therefore, specifically linked to esteem recognition of performance including the expressive, autonomous, co-operative aspects of work practices, achievement and contribution including fair pay, as these norms inform and are in turn modelled by the concrete tasks of work organisations. Beyond the impact of cross-cultural misrecognition on the development of individual self-esteem, self-realisation and autonomy, the chapter is interested in the relationship between the misrecognition of diverse cultural practices in employment contexts and the erosion of the substantial social bonds that are developed through the domain of paid work.

'They Don't Even Know What Good Work Is': Contested Cultural Perspectives and Workplace Practice

The analysis begins with a focus on contested perspectives in social work practice. In this section, we focus once more on Elsie, the Pacifica social worker first encountered in Chapter [Five](#). Here, Elsie provides an empiri-

cal example of disputed interpretations of best practice in family violence social work.

They (the work organisation) don't even know what good work is. To work with Pacific Islanders you have to connect with them at a personal level and a family level. They need to know who you are. Pacific Islanders won't even come through the door of this (social work) agency otherwise. My (Pacific Island) face needs to be out there, whether it be in the churches, schools, community event(s), because they need to see me. They need to know who I am. Then if they need to talk about something, especially something that is personally difficult like what this work I do here can involve (family violence), they don't talk to just anyone. They talk to me (specifically), because they already know me or they've seen me somewhere in the community. (In their minds) a relationship is already established, you know, and that's the important thing. "Yeah, I saw that lady at the school. She's a Pacific Islander and she is there to help us. I'll talk to her." This is the Pacific Island way, personal involvement, going out to people, knowing them and they know who you are, what church you go to, who you're related to and all that. ... None of its written (documented) but it's really essential in this work. I've seen it work (like this) many times because they (potential clients and/or concerned others) see me as one of them, which I am. They are my people. They feel more comfortable with me. That's why I was employed here (as the agency's Pacifica caseworker).

Elsie's comments, "They are my people. They feel more comfortable with me. That's why I was employed here", reflect the common multicultural practice whereby various social services are delivered to minority communities through culturally appropriate avenues and ethnically specific individuals and organisations (Mamak, 1993:174; Pearson, 1996:255–256; Thompson et al., 1998; Wise, 2009a:41). Indeed, although later evolving into higher order debates regarding nation building as the incorporation of ethno-cultural diversity, multiculturalism began in the 1970s in Australia as the Whitlam government response to the practicalities of settlement service provision, immigrant disadvantage and equality of access (Galligan & Roberts, 2003:5–7; Hage, 2003:59; Jupp, 2002:85–89; Kolet, 2010:2). Acting on recommendations made in the Galbally Report (Galbally, 1978:1–2), the Fraser government expanded on this initiative by significantly developing existing settlement services,

setting up special migrant programmes and establishing “multicultural resource centres to enable ethnic communities and voluntary agencies to cater to the welfare needs of migrants” (Koleth, 2010:7). Official recognition of ethno-cultural identity thus replaced the post-war non-recognition model, whereby diverse migrant groups had been expected to assimilate quickly into Australian society aided by good neighbour councils and White welcome committees (Galligan & Roberts, 2003:2–3; Jupp, 2002:13/22; Koleth, 2010:2; Wills, 2004:335–338; Wise, 2009a:41).

Through the existence of multicultural resource centres and ethnic-specific services and service workers, the institutionalisation of the multicultural service delivery model is observable in Australian localities characterised by high migrant and refugee populations. Local councils in these areas usually prioritise a multiculturalist approach to the provision of social services for what are now called ‘culturally and linguistically diverse’ communities or CALD communities (Australian Government Department of Social Services, 2017). The expectation is that shared ethnicity will improve access to, and the efficacy of, services. Specifically regarding Pacific Islanders, cultural identity is understood to play an important role in social service provision because it has positive impacts on the well-being and personal growth of Pacific peoples (Mulitalo-Lauta, 2001:261). The point is made by a number of the research participants as well. This is not to say that the policy is unproblematic. CALD communities are heterogeneous entities characterised, to some extent, by diverse migration experiences, internal divisions and layered degrees of solidarity (Hage, 2003:110–115; Noble, 2009a:882; Wise, 2004:4). Especially in Elsie’s branch of social work, systems of family violence are complex and at times better negotiated when the social worker derives from a different ethno-cultural background (Bernard, 2000:110; Dewar, 2012).

In this case however, Elsie’s experience tells her that even when multicultural approaches work well, shared ethnicity on its own will not bring Pacific Islanders “through the door of this agency”. To improve efficacy and thus do the job for which she is employed, Elsie argues that the strategy of ethnic identification must be integrated with work practices that reflect the cultural repertoires and circumstances of the diaspora community. She thus integrates her work as a Pacifica family violence worker with her voluntary role in a Pacific Islands non-government organisation

(NGO) and maintains that her attendance at NGO functions should be included in her official agency paid work hours. The agency abides by the standardised policies of a large state bureaucracy whose performance management systems require Elsie to complete a pre-defined number of documented office-based casework hours. Up until recently, Elsie's immediate manager has unofficially allowed her to include her NGO work in these official hours, but he is now under pressure from senior management to insist that the NGO involvement be undertaken in her own time, as a personal interest activity.

Elsie's argument is that her NGO involvement reflects valued cultural repertoires and therefore enhances the agency's visibility and community outreach in two ways. Firstly, the substantive networks built through NGO work utilise the 'cultural competence' (Sheetal, 2012:1; Sundar, 2009:104) for which Elsie was employed at this social work agency. There is criticism of the idea of cultural competence, especially regarding its potential to entrench essentialist notions of ethno-cultural identity (Dean, 2001; Park, 2005; Williams, 2006). However, from Elsie's perspective, these networks and the solidarity built in them assist her to negotiate complex kin dynamics, authoritarian family traditions, customary acceptance of family violence and resistance to change that contribute to domestic violence continuing as a largely hidden phenomenon in Pacifica communities (Counts, 1990:3). We can understand Elsie's role as encompassing, in a specific ethno-cultural context, the discretionary authority and case-by-case policy interpretation of 'the street level bureaucrat' (Lipsky, 2010). Secondly, in 'putting her Pacific Island face out there' through NGO involvement, she facilitates tangible engagement with Pacifica people that she claims is deeply appreciated and recognised in the diaspora. Such engagement provides opportunities for informal encounters with potential client families, who are unlikely to access the agency's services via formal referral processes (Hegarty & Glasziou, 2011). Elsie's observation, "They see me as one of them, which I am ... a relationship is already established, you know, and that's the important thing", reflects a group identity constructed in opposition to racial, ethnic and cultural others (Lamont, 2000:3–5; Nederveen Pieterse, 2004:27; Omi & Winant, 2002:124). Mutual recognition based on this

identity can facilitate a sense of belonging, comfort and 'ontological security' amongst strangers in everyday settings (Noble, 2005:107).

Thus embedded in the diaspora, Elsie experiences herself as accessible to the community because the roles of Pacifica diaspora member, NGO volunteer and gainfully employed social worker are inextricably intertwined in her personhood in everyday places. "Yeah, I saw that lady at the school. She's a Pacific Islander. I'll talk to her". As Elsie spontaneously enacts aspects of what may be a familiar cultural habitus (Bourdieu, 2000:138–150), potential client families and concerned others may settle into some sense of bodily and cultural affinity. From Elsie's perspective, rather than formal referral, it is this kind of informal recognition atmosphere in which the beginnings of family violence disclosure may be forthcoming and the necessary relational infrastructure built. Despite the complications of resistance, cultural shame and family conflict in social work contexts (Forrester et al., 2012:121–122), Elsie has 'seen it work like this many times'.

The approach has a naturalistic feel that reduces professional distance and reflects valued cultural repertoires such as informality, relationship and, as touched on in the previous empirical chapters, that sense of working in the community for the community. In Elsie's words, "This is the Pacific Island way, personal involvement, going out to people, knowing them and they know who you are". However, the 'Pacific Island way' is a fluid notion involving contested viewpoints, especially across generational boundaries. As several research participants hinted at, the Pacific Islands diaspora is evolving in divergent ways as group centred, ascribed rank, authoritarian and religious traditions rub up against Western notions of individualism, egalitarianism, democracy and secularism (Macpherson, 2001:79; Wassmann, 1998:16). Furthermore, rather than as an 'ethnic essence', cultural difference flows into everyday activity and emerges in pragmatic and uneven ways (Noble, 2009a:882). Nevertheless, what counts here is not so much the content of a 'Pacific Islands modus operandi' but the fact that Elsie asserts a claim for it against the conventional practice of her workplace. In essence, she argues that the Pacifica approach allows her to do her job more efficiently and productively.

Elsie seems to construct the Pacifica approach, and a related strong sense of Pacific Island identity, in perceived opposition to 'the Western

way'. However, the agency's approach is perhaps better understood in the light of a managerialist audit culture that has become normalised in Western governance under a neo-liberal ethos, rather than simply an expression of the individualist, rationalist and universalist values of social work's Western genesis (Gray et al., 2008a:3; Penna & O'Brien, 2009:110–116; Staniforth et al., 2011:194; Strathern, 2000:2–4; West & Heath, 2011:217; Wiseman, 2005:57–61). Over the last 30 years, human service bureaucracies have been profoundly transformed by the "simulated disciplines of the free market" (Shore & Wright, 2000:63–64). In actuality, it is the application of business efficiency and accounting protocols in social work to which Elsie's objections are addressed. She is not alone in objecting. Critics argue that the 'reflective autonomous humanist practitioner' of the old public service culture has become something of an 'unreflective management-speak client processor' through an individualist casework model, numeric documentation and formulaic performance appraisal systems (Bay, 2011:223; Hick & Murray, 2009:93; White, 2009:129). From this perspective, it is the tension between the quantitative managerialist environment and the qualitative community-oriented approach that underlies the conflict in Elsie's narrative (Harris & Unwin, 2009:20). Managerialist processes 'lock up' organisational resources (Strathern, 2000:2), and foreclose somewhat on the possibilities of self-directed professionalism, creative invention, collegiality and 'problem finding as well as problem solving' (Dejours, 2014:123–129; Giri, 2000:179; Sennett, 2006:196; Shore & Wright, 2000:63–64/79) that characterised traditional social work.

Moreover, Elsie's idea of a culturally appropriate practice fits well with post-colonial approaches to social work. Audit processes cut across this kind of practice even as, paradoxically, professionals in Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia and internationally embrace post-colonial notions that redefine social work, beyond Eurocentric understandings, by recognising ethno-cultural difference, collective empowerment, indigenous knowledge and cultural local-ness (Allan et al., 2009; Fejo-King & Briskman, 2009; Gray et al., 2008b; Gray & Fook, 2004; Quinn, 2009; Staniforth et al., 2011:194; Young & Zubrzycki, 2011:161–164). Thus relationship building is likely to take a back seat to 'the purchasing of generic care-packages' (Penna & O'Brien, 2009:116) and strengths-based

approaches tend to be applied individually rather than communally (van Heugten, 2011:182). Elsie's 'grassroots involvement', being out and about in the community as the key to raising awareness and developing links with potential 'service-users', is largely undocumented and unmonitored in the formal performance appraisal system of her workplace. In this regard, one first-generation Pacifica social worker indicated, with humour, that detailed documentation and performance reviews are 'foreign notions that must be complied with to keep jobs'. Her light-hearted cynicism is no doubt shared by many working in public service, their jokes and anecdotes regarding managerialist excesses exchanged around the water cooler but "massaged out of official accounts" (Harris & Unwin, 2009:19).

This is a minor struggle in the larger scheme of things, but to Elsie a meaningful stand against the marginalisation of her particular cultural interpretation of best practice at work. Her response, as expressed in the excerpt above, contains strong elements of resistance because in Elsie's understanding, an integrated perspective is integral to raising traditionally low Pacific Island reporting rates in a locality that she knows to be characterised by high levels of family violence. Elsie's thinking is in line with calls for an 'intersectionality framework' that addresses the ways in which ethnicity and race interact with gender to produce the individual and structural conditions of domestic violence and other social problems (Murray & Powell, 2011:48; Sheppard, 2006:124). Her views are supported by research that highlights the importance of culturally appropriate services and community engagement by a culturally competent worker to effectively address family violence in migrant diasporas (Bagshaw et al., 2000:103; Harne & Radford, 2008:9–11; Levine & Benkert, 2011; Sheetal, 2012). Elsie's perspective is also supported by other Australian immigrant groups, who advocate a similar embedded approach to address the difficulties and complexities of connecting those affected by domestic violence with services that can assist them (Ghafournia, 2010:209; Pham, 2011:7).

In the case of work, there are also objective measures regarding the efficacy of a culturally specific practice. In Elsie's case, the non-recognition of her approach undermines that efficacy because it dilutes cultural diversity, limits the contributions of minority employees and entrenches the

mainstream dominance that multicultural policies set out to transcend. In fact, research has found that managerialist policies tend to be oriented towards external audiences rather than improving the actual productivity of a work organisation's internal systems (Vallas, 2012:129–130). In 'turning a blind eye' and allowing Elsie to register her NGO hours in the official casework record, her manager appears to signal his agreement regarding the efficacy of her culturally specific practice, as do privately some of her work colleagues. But he is eventually forced to abandon this more discursive approach and assert managerial control. This illustrates the way in which managerialist priorities regarding economic restraint, formulaic procedures and performance accountability tend to pit managers against social workers in comparison with the earlier bureaucratic structure that allowed managers greater freedom to share the concerns of the frontline practitioners they managed (Evans, 2009:146/161). The disputed work practice ends in Elsie's capitulation a few months later, when the possibilities of a negotiated compromise morph into straightforward compliance.

I said (to my manager), you know that I'm not happy but I'll do it (all hours spent in office based casework). Because that's what we've been asked to do. But it really bugs me that they won't recognise it (the NGO work) as legitimate hours.

The important point is that a culturally defined practice is intrinsic to Elsie complying with work-specific norms regarding efficacy, productivity and professionalism, and it is the failure of the employing institution to recognise this 'fact' that galls: "They don't even know what good work is". Ultimately, Elsie is required to accept an interpretation of 'what good work is' and 'how good work is to be achieved' that is contrary to her own cultural knowledge and professional judgement. Some of the other human services institutions, recognising the value of a 'cultural approach', acknowledge the attendance of their Pacifica workers at NGO functions as legitimate. This fact seems to compound Elsie's frustration and sense of defeat. Moreover, conflicts regarding different cultural interpretations of norms that then result in different work practices are not just a special case within larger, more significant social conflicts. The conflict in Elsie's

case is quite specific, relating as it does, not just to general social norms, but to key norms involved in 'doing good work'. In that sense, there is a lot at stake because the world of paid work is not just a world of instrumental action, but also a domain in which social identities are largely shaped (Honneth, 2010:224; Vallas, 2012:6; Zurn, 2010:16). Thus work-specific norms regarding 'doing a job well', such as productivity, efficiency, professionalism and reliability, greatly build and enhance Elsie's identity. This strong sense of identity, developed through good work, is observable in the narratives of other research participants whom we will meet later in the chapter.

As clearly described above, Elsie's approach is a creative contribution to 'bridging the practical and cultural gap' between the aims of her social work agency and the successful implementation of those aims in the Pacifica diaspora. This important aspect of cross-cultural work will be developed more fully in the next section, but let us dwell briefly upon it here. Cultural and practical bridging practice entails specific cultural competencies as well as expressive, co-operative self-directive qualities that, in being sidelined through managerialist imperatives, appears to Elsie as non-recognition: "It really bugs me that they won't recognise it (the NGO work) as legitimate hours". This non-recognition no doubt cuts across the norms of achievement and contribution for transcultural workers. But further to this, a worker required to practice in a way that s/he knows to be less than effective, is potentially less able to benefit from the self-transformative opportunities that the performance of fulfilling work offers. Indeed, the failure to recognise alternative notions of best practice, including intercultural bridging practice, can actively undermine professionals' morale and also their loyalty, with likely negative effects on an organisation's effectiveness. It is more probable that cynicism and passivity will emerge, together with a disengagement from the institutional reality that is beyond the worker's personal control (Harris & Unwin, 2009:19; Shore & Wright, 2000:79). As Sennett (2006:196) asks rhetorically, "How can you commit to an institution which is not committed to you?"

It is possible to take this analysis a little further regarding the expressive and co-operative aspects to be found in the performance of work activity. As first discussed in Chapter [Five](#), there is no doubt that, for Elsie, the

integration of her paid and voluntary roles is important to her. Indeed, it is likely the very fact of her culturally inspired ‘lack of separation’ between gainful employment and voluntary NGO work that allows Elsie, in part at least, to ‘see herself in her work, to become at least minimally the subject of her work’. As Deranty (2012a:172–173, drawing on Dejours’ psychodynamics of work) argues, the expressiveness found in working activity, while not all-encompassing, enables the subject to “integrate meaningfully the working activity in his or her subjective economy”. Furthermore, through her voluntary activity, Elsie understands her functioning as meaningful, as useful and as contributing to the social good of this diaspora community (Sennett, 2006:189–193). A strong sense of meaning is also to be found in co-operation and reciprocal interaction with the others involved. Indeed, notwithstanding the internal politics of community organisations, it is through meaningful interaction and co-operative activity focused on enhancing the community’s well-being, observed during fieldwork as ‘caring for the community to make the community work’, that ‘cultural peers’ acknowledge and esteem one another for work that matters deeply to them.

For Elsie, the work organisation’s misrecognition of what she understands to be culturally appropriate and more effective modes of practice is hard to bear, and we will meet her again in a later section. However, as we saw in the previous chapter, this narrative of misrecognition in the workplace seems to be counterpoised against a narrative of recognition in the client community and amongst the NGO workforce, especially social esteem awarded for intercultural bridging practices. These themes are continued in the following section, where participants offer narratives regarding pragmatic adaptations aimed at bridging practical and cultural gaps between institutional expectations and the frontline realities of human services work in cross-cultural contexts.

‘Bridging The Gap’: Negotiating the Prescribed and Real of Workplace Practice

In the previous section, a worker was seen to contest aspects of workplace practice and present her alternative as a more culturally appropriate and, therefore, more effective option. As noted in that section,

Elsie can be conceived of as acting as a conduit between conflicting interpretive horizons. In other words, her culturally defined practice represents her discretionary attempts to bridge operational disjunction between the work organisation's regulations and the complex reality of working at the frontline of Pacifica family violence. This section will build on the analysis by developing two further aspects of this theme. The first aspect fleshes out workplace disparities between prescription and actuality and the pragmatic strategies adopted by cross-cultural workers to bridge these gaps. The second aspect highlights the apparent non-recognition of such practices as performance worthy of esteem at work.

The bridging theme is of particular relevance in this analysis because a number of the research participants are employed, like Elsie, in Pacifica liaison or advocacy roles or are required to deliver human services programmes to their specific diaspora communities. Here is Lila, a first-generation Polynesian migrant, describing everyday operational dilemmas that require her intervention at work.

When our people (Pacific Islanders) attend meetings, they don't feel comfortable, especially if they weren't born here (Australia) because (in) those places, they use a Western format. It's more formal. It's (held) at a certain time and that's the first problem (laughs). I'm having to apologise and change it (the timeframe of a meeting). We (Pacific Islanders) do things differently. We have an idea about hospitality so we have refreshments and there's usually a prayer by the pastor. ... And usually we talk and come to a verbal agreement. Traditionally, we haven't worried about (written) documentation but it's expected here (laughs and indicates the researcher's information letters and consent forms). But it's (traditional ways are) changing of course. I notice with my grandson. ... (He) says, "Nan, that's the old ways" (laughs).

Lila's "We do things differently" describes her knowledge, garnered during years of Pacifica community involvement in Australia, of the existence of disparities between the workplace's regulatory culture, for example, regarding time and documentation, and the realities of cultural engagement. In referring to her third-migrant-generation grandson, Lila acknowledges the flow of change in the diaspora, the implication that the

first generation struggles with modern workplace practice while the second and third generations are developing savvy negotiation strategies across ethno-cultural difference in work and other domains (Noble, 2007:341; Noble et al., 1999:31). However, largely unnoticed by her managers in the everyday to and fro of office routines, it falls to Lila to improvise the means of bridging the gap between workplace procedures and client expectations, particularly for those who “weren’t born here”. Chris, a Pacific Islander working in educational liaison, succinctly captures the idea of the Pacifica human services worker as embodied bridge.

We (Pacific Island liaison officers) are employed to be a bridge between our culture and Australian culture.

Similarly, Pacifica social worker Marion uses a bridging analogy while describing efforts to work effectively with Pacific Island clients.

I find myself bridging the gap between our people and Western culture.

The notion of bridging gaps at work was explained briefly in Chapters [Four](#) and [Six](#) and also touched on in earlier sections of this chapter. Further elucidation is offered here though, given that the specific topic of bridging is the main subject of this section. Recognition and work specialists have drawn ideas from Dejours’ psychodynamics of work (Dejours, 2007, 2012, 2014) to resuscitate Honneth’s first critical conception regarding the normativity inherent in the performance and product of work activity. Dejours views work as ‘lived activity with self-development possibilities’ rather than as mechanistic procedure and the worker as ‘an intelligent social being’ who is interested in the effectiveness and quality of her or his work (Deranty, 2010c:194). From this perspective, developmental possibilities are understood to emerge through the application of commitment and practical intelligence to bridge the gap between the prescriptive regulations of a particular work task and its actual implementation as activity (Deranty, 2010c:183–184; Smith & Deranty, 2012a:59–60).

McDonalds, the international fast food chain, is an obvious example of a company built on a vision of eliminating some of this mismatch

between 'the prescribed and the real', in that case for the purpose of marketing standardised quality. Their instruction manuals stipulate, in minute detail, the means by which the worker is to undertake every single productive task. Dejours' point is that although such descriptions attempt to regulate work tasks, messy realities and unexpected contingencies inevitably arise that require a worker to improvise, to act to temper the gap between the stipulated ideal and what he calls the 'real of work'. These actions may range from disinterested fixing attempts to motivated endeavours to maintain the integrity of work systems. But it is these pragmatic adaptations in their many and varied forms that comprise, *when recognised*, the source of the worker's self-development.

In this theorising, Dejours has in mind prescription and implementation gaps that emerge in the technical division of labour, that is, in the world of the material production of concrete goods. But the notion of bridging disparities is also illuminative in the world of human services and in intercultural service contexts in particular, where two different orders of bridging are discernible. The first order can be understood through Dejours' classic notion of pragmatic adaptations to bridge gaps between job prescription and job realisation, as outlined above, which he developed through research in culturally homogenous workplaces (Dejours, 2007). But as well as the disparity between prescription and realisation, there is a kind of second-order gap between workplace expectations and what actually works in cultural terms. This is the gap between different ways of bridging the gap, as it were. In other words, this second-order activity constitutes the bridging of disparities between different ethno-cultural repertoires in multicultural workplaces.

The following analysis uses this notion of bridging gaps in both the work and the cultural sense. In bridging gaps between different cultural repertoires, Pacifica human service workers also bridge functional disparities between institutional requirements and the realities of servicing a Pacifica clientele. They do so usually in the service of professionalism, institutional efficacy and client satisfaction, in other words to execute well the tasks for which they are employed. The next three sections will focus on cultural and functional gaps at work and Pacifica workers' attempts to address them in the three areas that are discernible in Lila's transcript above: timeframes, hospitality, and presentation and documen-

tation. Other respondents identify these three areas as critical zones of difference as well. From Honneth's perspective of course and as noted in previous chapters, the differences can be understood as reflecting tensions in the value horizon regarding the core norm of work. In this case, a Western neo-liberal preoccupation with formality, economy and accountability rubs up against a more informal, collectively oriented, non-economistic Pacifica worldview.

Timeframes

Lila's remark that work meetings are "(held) at a certain time and that's the first problem" is delivered with a laugh. The customary disregard for Palagi (European) adherence to time and punctuality is the source of much humorous comment, as well as frustration, amongst Pacific Islanders working in bridging roles. Peter, an older Polynesian man with long experience in social work, reflects on what he calls "the traditional way of doing things" in regard to time values and the inclusion of elder wisdom, in this case in relation to matters of justice.

Well, essentially I think the Anglo European group revolves around earnings, money. For instance, they equate time with money. Whereas Pacific Islanders would equate time with the value of what is being discussed. So that's fundamentally um, well that's in the traditional way of doing things. ... So they valued wisdom on par with education. So very wise old people could not dictate a sentence in English but they had a lot of wisdom, you know. And they would sit down and talk. And that's where they discuss the matter, ah and not apportion time upfront like the Western courts do, with setting how much (time) do you want. Two hours. Oh alright, we'll resolve this matter in two hours. They (Pacific Islanders) would let the matter unfold and take the time needed for that to happen. It's a more informal and inclusive process in that sense.

A picture of customary consultation processes emerges from Peter's description. Rather than a specified timeframe, time is associated with the value placed on the matter at hand, its organic unfurling and the inclusion of all interested voices in the discussions to pre-empt future conflict (Campbell, 1990:197; Tcherkezoff, 1998:428–431). During fieldwork observation, aspects of this traditional approach are detected in

the atmosphere of heightened informality and unhurriedness at Pacifica meetings and events, most of which begin and finish well outside advertised times. There is invariably little concern about punctuality amongst participants, who gather in relaxed mode in small groups to talk and partake at the ever-present refreshment table. Occasionally, a Pacifica worker who has been released to attend the meeting makes a humorous comment about 'getting back to work late'. Connie, a member of a Pacific Islands organisation, displays agitation when one such meeting is yet to be brought to order 35 minutes after the publicised time. She is aware that this time lag is "not a good look" in terms of the three non-Pacific participants waiting patiently for the meeting to commence, one of whom glances at her watch pointedly several times. Connie seems at a loss as to how to mitigate the disjuncture between the 'island time' approach and 'normal' workplace adherence to punctuality. Eventually, she is overheard to comment quietly and apologetically:

Island time, island time! We (the organisation) said we wouldn't do this (start meetings late) but here we are again.

This approach bears similarity to Lila's strategy for negotiating the disparity between the regulated and the actual of timekeeping at work, consisting at it did of an apologetic demeanour and renegotiation: "I have to apologise and change it (the timeframe of a meeting)". Here is Marion's expression concerning the same time-related disjuncture at work.

And the time thing (sighs). Pacific Islanders take more time. Everyone expects to have a say and come to an agreement and some are longwinded (laughs), but the room is only booked for two hours. And it (the meeting) always begins late because most Pacific Islanders don't really value punctuality, especially the older generation. I mean, I try to tell them, be on time because the room is only booked for two hours. But I'm beating my head against the brick wall (laughs). So I find myself making excuses for my people. ... I'm forever negotiating (at work) about these things.

Marion demonstrates inventiveness in tempering the gap between stipulated timeframes and the reality of their implementation. The prescrip-

tive system at her work is based on room bookings, which requires her to specify a meeting’s start and finish times. Pacific Island clients attending the meeting habitually turn up late, which creates an obvious problem in that the meeting is then likely to run into the next booked time allocation. Marion attempts to mitigate this difficulty by negotiating with work colleagues and, where possible, by scheduling meetings in timeslots before the lunch break and before finishing time. This strategy provides greater flexibility because, in these timeslots, meetings can run over time without inconveniencing others. Unlike Lila, Marion has found creative ways to ‘get around’ the mismatch between work prescriptions and practical realities in relation to timeframes. This is an example of Dejours’ notion of the worker utilising creative intelligence to bridge management direction and task completion in an intercultural context. In this case, the worker bridges the gap by bridging the cross-cultural divide.

Hospitality

A second theme, emergent in Lila’s reflections above, concerns differences in the priority placed on hospitality. Working in community liaison, Lila’s tasks include ensuring that Pacific Islanders attend scheduled meetings and consultations which they sometimes fail to do, and that they do so on time. Her comment, “and there’s often not refreshments”, indicates her understanding that the provision of food and beverage is an effective means of mitigating absence and lateness, especially in regard to first-generation clients. The importance placed on the offering of refreshments is a recurring theme during fieldwork, and the researcher is the recipient of many such acts of cordiality. In a later conversation, Lila offers her insights regarding its significance in the Pacific Islands world.

The first thing is to offer hospitality (and) welcome. This may seem a trivial thing, but you have made the effort to come. We reciprocate, (we) offer (you) refreshment.

Lila identifies cultural values communicated through hospitality that are a priority for her Pacifica clientele. Hospitality conveys an honouring of the social bond, as well as emphasising the importance of reciprocal

exchange in traditional Pacifica culture (Crocombe, 1989:79–80; Lindstrom, 1999:201). The offering of food and drink fulfils the moral obligation to reciprocate the attendees' gift of presence, thus restoring mana and mutuality and strengthening social solidarity (Douglas, 1990; Mauss, 2002:15/59/83; Thomas, 1991). Of course, hospitality is a value shared by most cultural groups but it is less of a priority in the modern managerialist workplace. During fieldwork, the time taken for eating and drinking at a formal meeting and the relaxed informality surrounding such occasions, seemed to transcend a more narrowly defined concept of relationship building. The partaking of refreshments appeared to create a deliberate space for social inclusion, facilitating the development of social bonds amongst participants as a fundamental priority, often at the beginning of meetings.

From Lila's perspective, social reciprocity and inclusion communicated through everyday hospitality are the best means of bridging the gap between work expectations regarding attendance and punctuality and actuality, because the practice is a familiar cultural ritual. Of course, a certain level of personal discomfort is to be expected in formal meeting situations. But a lack of cultural familiarity can constitute a deeper level of insecurity, carrying the potential to negatively influence participants' capacity for social agency (Noble, 2005:119). Lila's narrative identifies reciprocity obligations as part of a larger 'nourishment package' that she knows to be an effective bridge. This package would offer participants homely comforts such as refreshments, prayers, a relaxed timeframe and informal procedures in a workplace context. As with Elsie in the previous section, we gain a picture of greater client discomfort in one setting and greater client ease in the other.

However, Lila's ability to provision such an environment is restricted because work budgets mostly preclude funding, timeframes are set and documentation is mandatory. As well, the only available refreshment preparation area is attached to the staff recreation room, which highlights the way in which purpose-built architecture signals particular dominant interpretations in the value horizon concerning work. When Lila does occasionally use this kitchen for work purposes, there are collegial mut-

terings regarding not only the use of 'their kitchen' but also the privileging of 'her Pacific Island clients'. Marion notes a similar funding issue regarding the provision of hospitality, a simple everyday adaptation that she too understands to be effective in terms of client attendance, punctuality and cultural solidarity.

I find myself bridging the gap between our people and Western culture, which makes me angry. Trying to get my managers to understand about needing funding for food and drink as a standard thing (so) I don't have to ask for it every time (sighs).

Meanwhile Velma, a Polynesian woman employed to deliver parenting education to her cultural group, takes the simple route of supplying refreshments herself.

If I want them (Pacific Islanders) to come in here (to parent education meetings), we have those things (refreshments, prayers) otherwise they don't come. First thing (the participants do is) look at the fruit (models of good nutrition) (and ask) where's the chips, where's the cream buns (laughs)? But I have to get money for (the) refreshments. And the manager, she says no money left (laughs). I think she doesn't like it (me asking for money for the refreshments). She doesn't understand. Our traditional way of doing things is still with us. So (I) buy it (the refreshments) myself.

In supplying refreshments and instituting prayers, Velma takes it upon herself to bridge the cultural gap. Cultural canniness tells her that it is these strategies, more than a sense of educational benefit, which will achieve decent rates of attendance, at least at the beginning of parenting courses. Like Marion, Velma enacts simple pragmatic actions that bridge ethno-cultural difference and therefore concrete workplace gaps between task prescription and task implementation. They are practical and realistic undertakings aimed at enhancing the efficacy of the work. The Pacifica clientele no doubt appreciates these practices, but they go largely unrecognised by the management of the work organisations or, for that matter, by the workers themselves or their colleagues.

Presentation and Documentation

The third theme to be drawn from Lila's narrative above highlights cultural differences in relation to modes of presentation and documentation. Fieldwork discovered a considerable gap between the general workplace emphasis on written and visual methods of presentation and documentation and a Pacifica orientation towards customary oral, aural and memory approaches (Burt, 1998:97–99; Crocombe, 1999:208; Marsh, 1999:167; Mather, 1999:296; Thomas, 1991:72). Lila's "Traditionally, we haven't worried about (written) documentation but it's expected here ... usually we talk and come to a verbal agreement" identifies a tradition of communication that values "open linguistic expression ... across generations" (Smith & Deranty, 2012b:9). Alison, the Polynesian community worker encountered in Chapter Six, smiles broadly when asked to sign duplicate copies of the research participant consent form. Picking them up along with other research documentation, she spontaneously comments on differences in cultural repertoires of presentation and documentation.

I bet not many of the Pacific Islanders you've interviewed bothered to read any of this before they signed! ... Yeah, we don't worry much about paperwork, although of course I do here (at work). Some think that's a bit naïve but that's the Pacific Island way. Last minute, no paperwork (laughs).

Pacific Islander Paul reflects on the divergence between written and oral presentation styles in his work as a facilitator.

Actually, it's just in me to go and sit with them and talk. That's what you do in Pacific Island culture. Sit down and talk things through. Some say too much (laughs). ... Yes, it does take more time but you get to know them (through talking). Find out who's who. They like to know who I am, where I'm from, all that. You don't wheel in a whiteboard and start making diagrams (on it) or haul down a screen and present them with a powerpoint (presentation), (or give them) handouts (laughs). You may laugh (to researcher who is also laughing) but I've seen it done, certainly in the bad old days. There's more CALD awareness now. (It's the) latest term. Means culturally and linguistically diverse (laughs). ... Our culture is traditionally an oral culture. Actually, it's a problem in Australia and I've been working in Australia since I was a young man so I

know both worlds. It's just a different style of doing things. ... Actually, the first thing you'd start with (in a consultation with a Pacific Island group) would be a prayer, maybe a hymn if it's predominantly first generation (participants). Then there'd be a long discussion. And without doubt there'd be food, and lots of it (laughs).

Like the previous participants, Paul acts to attenuate discrepancies between the expected and the real of cross-cultural practice. In particular, this excerpt highlights the way in which such attenuation is less a strongly conscious act and more an embodied cultural repertoire. Bourdieu's notion of habitus makes further sense of this cultural embodiment, especially as it is captured in Paul's comment, "It's just in me". An individual habitus is a habitual way of being, in Bourdieu's words, "a system of durable, transposable *dispositions*, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures" (Bourdieu, 1977:72). As well, Paul professes to consciously "work around the usual procedures by doing things Pacific Island style". To progress work agendas, he often completes the required documentation tasks for Pacifica groups. Although largely unrecognised by managers and peers, Paul's attitude conveys a capacity to recognise his practical modifications as effective professional performance.

However, Pacifica people with less education can struggle to mitigate divergence in cultural repertoires concerning presentation and documentation. Mere is a young Polynesian sports coach working in a coaching programme for at-risk Pacifica youth, the funding for which has ceased. However, the supportive principal of a local secondary school is keen to contract Mere to implement the programme. At first, Mere is enthusiastic because implementation at the school will see the continuation of the programme and, just as importantly, her job. But then 'reality bites'. The principal requires a written programme proposal.

She's (the principal said), all we need is a (written) proposal. Just make it good. We know that it (the existing coaching programme) works, so do that (write up the existing programme). So just make sure it's all in black and white (and that you) put your heart on the paper, and then we'll see if the proposal is acceptable. And I'm like, it will take some time to be honest. ... So at the moment I'm just doing the backyards (hard yards) of ... my proposal, which is taking me ages

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'cause it's just putting words on paper. For me it's just, like, hard. ... I tell them, like I'm not good at school. I'm not good at theory, written and stuff. ... I'm more practical. I can talk about (the programme), like I'm doing with yous. ... Like, I've got a little bubble with writing coming out (computer programme using a web of ideas to describe the programme). But that's about it. But I know there's more I should put into it (sighs).

This narrative reveals a mismatch between the workplace's usual written mode and Mere's ability to deliver it. In requesting a 'black and white proposal', one however which includes Mere's heart, the principal is following standard managerialist practices. She appears to have little insight into the fact that her helpful suggestion for Mere to simply write up the existing programme as the basis of the proposal, stymies Mere. There is a sense of pathos in Mere's description of her progress to date, "a little bubble with writing coming out". Knowing that she lacks the ability to write a 'proper' programme proposal, Mere proposes a heartfelt oral presentation as her means of bridging this gap: "I can talk about (the programme), like I'm doing with yous". To access funding, Mere makes just such an oral address to a Pacific Islands organisation, which is well received. However, this organisation is also under pressure to comply with documented funding models in an era of expanded audit mechanisms and requires committal to paper as well. Stumped, discouraged and without strategies, Mere shelves the proposal. She must then explain her actions to the Pacifica students, who are expecting the implementation of her new coaching programme.

Yeah, I talked to them (the Pacifica students). "Hang in there with me" (I said). "I just need a proposal. I'm just writing a proposal and I can set up the programme (at the school). There's a lot of paper work that I have to do." And they are just, like, "Ah ok". But then we put it (the proposal) on hold, (and) they all (the students in the old programme) dropped back to their old (dysfunctional) ways. "But yous are slipping back" (I said to them). "Trust me, I know, 'cause I keep an eye on yous." And they're like, "Mere, we're sorry". "Don't be sorry (I said to them), 'cause I feel like I've let yous down".

Mere attempts, but fails, to bridge the disparity between institutional requirements and her accustomed style of presentation. She keenly feels her clientele's disappointed expectations and the sense of having failed

vulnerable young people, whose at-risk status is of deep concern to her. Mere’s story brings an immediate awareness of the potentially deleterious effects of this ‘failure’ on her sense of performance, achievement and contribution that are, under Honneth’s critical conceptions, normative in the realm of work. But this analysis frames the episode in terms of failure of a different kind. Mere’s experience highlights the failure to recognise practical and cultural disparities between workplace expectations regarding presentation and documentation and what is actually workable, achievable and effective in cultural terms.

For the other workers too, though often successfully addressing disparities between the prescribed and the real in intercultural contexts, there remains a sense of misrecognition or ‘missed recognition’ that may undermine that essential sense of achievement and contribution that is engendered through one’s work. Moreover, it is the application of objective intelligence, autonomy and creativity in the work of practical and cultural bridging that constitutes the transcendent possibilities of the performance of work activity. As we know, social recognition in the form of acknowledgement, admiration and gratitude is required for this developmental potential to be fully realised (Dejours, 2012:226–227). The problem for the Pacifica workers whose voices are heard in this section is that their pragmatic adaptations aimed at improving professionalism and efficacy, as were Elsie’s earlier, go largely unrecognised as such by peers, managers, clients and indeed, by themselves. This may be because, as the embodiment of a personal habitus or cultural repertoire, the adaptations seem natural and unremarkable. Indeed, rather than informally congratulating themselves and ethnic colleagues for ‘working around tricky realities using their cultural knowledge’ so as to satisfy contradictory work demands, many Pacifica cross-cultural workers are more likely to express a complex mixture of cultural reproach and collective injury. This critical focus is developed in the next section.

‘They Need Detox Or What’: Cultural Culpability and Collective Grievance

The previous sections of this chapter focused on different ethno-cultural values, or cultural repertoires, as they create operational tensions and discrepancies between workplace expectations and intercultural implemen-

tation. The analysis highlighted the contradictions and dilemmas, narratives and counter narratives, that emerge for Pacific Island workers negotiating gaps at work, both in the practical and cultural sense, as well as a complex misrecognition regarding the norms of work. These contradictions and dilemmas are partly discernible in the complex juxtaposition of personal and cultural culpability *and* collective grievance that is woven through some of the narratives presented in the previous section.

For example, in bemoaning some of the confounding effects of cross-cultural difference on everyday practice, Marion expresses impotence, "beating my head against the brick wall", which highlights both personal, cultural and workplace deficiencies. Vexed that she finds herself excusing what she sees as Pacifica people's entrenched failings in work contexts, "I try to tell them be on time ... I find myself making excuses for my people", Marion's frustration is also aimed at workplace management, "The room is only booked for two hours ... I'm forever negotiating about these things ... trying to get my managers to understand". In Lila's case, it is not clear whether she regards the cross-cultural tension as due more to workplace inflexibility or client failings: "It's (held) at a certain time and that's the first problem. I'm having to apologise and change it (the time-frame of a meeting)". Her apologies are made to work administrators and colleagues when renegotiating room bookings and meeting times. In that sense, she acts more as an apologist for the Pacifica diaspora rather than apologising to it for alien work systems, although in practice she probably embodies both stances at different times depending on her audience. Such are the ambivalences and dilemmas of intercultural bridging at work.

Velma too can be read as juxtaposing critique from both cultural and workplace perspectives. She seems to express both apology for the inconvenience caused by the continuation of the traditional way of doing things and mild frustration that her manager does not appreciate the effectiveness, indeed the cultural necessity, of her traditional approach: "I think she doesn't like it (me asking for money for the refreshments). She doesn't understand". Connie's stance though, as noted earlier, expresses less ambivalence and greater cultural reproach: "Island time, island time! We said we wouldn't do this (start meetings late) but here we are again". Taking for granted the validity, indeed the superiority, of dominant val-

ues regarding punctuality, Connie's solidarity leans towards the non-Pacific audience at the meeting. Her attitude is echoed in the words of another Pacific Islands worker, whispered with censure and apology to the researcher at the end of a long meeting focussed on Pacifica juvenile crime and gang activity in the locality: "We begin late, all this talking, in the end no decision recorded. Then we do it all again at the next meeting".

The gently derisive laughter that accompanies Alison's observation, "That's the Pacific Island way, last minute, no paperwork", is commonly experienced during fieldwork and was originally discussed in Chapter [Six](#). Culturally disparaging humour is interpreted here as covering a sense of ambivalent reprimand. Pacifica participants' laughter acknowledges, to some extent at least, acceptance of the inadequacy of particular cultural habits in comparison with the functioning required of mainstream work organisations. In this case, Pacific Island workers' laxness regarding time management, planning and paperwork is unacceptable and they should learn to adhere to normative practices because these practices are better. A sense of personal and cultural inadequacy in the face of standard managerialist methodology comes through in the subtext of Mere's transcript as well: "I'm not good at theory, written and stuff. I'm more practical. I can talk about (the programme)". In being unable to deliver the required written programme proposal, Mere does not question its underlying norms or cultural validity and instead automatically blames herself for falling short. Furthermore, her self-proclaimed ineffectiveness when it comes to theory inadvertently generates, through comparison, the subtle devaluation of her self-acknowledged oral ability and indeed, of the Pacifica oral tradition.

An orientation towards cultural accountability rather than collective grievance is noted in these and other bridging workers' transcripts. Having internalised the ascendant discourses of work and dependent on their jobs for financial security, many Pacific Island employees take a pragmatic attitude. Notwithstanding some ambivalence, it is 'just common sense' that normative procedures be enacted so that institutional and inter-institutional functionality is maintained. Customary cultural repertoires, such as beginning a meeting when all attendees are present, building social solidarity in the gathering time and oral documentation,

are generally unworkable in the modern world of work. Meetings need to begin on time because venue bookings are systematised, outcome deadlines are pre-arranged and attendees have flow-on commitments. This practical attitude tends to result in negative affect, such as impatience, frustration and blame, expressed by Pacifica intercultural workers towards Pacific Island colleagues and clientele alike. If only they would 'show up, get there on time, plan properly, follow proper procedure, bring the required paperwork, document adequately, follow proffered advice, avail themselves of help that local services offer'.

Pacifica liaison worker Frankie best illustrates this attitude towards cultural deficiency. During a fieldwork interview, Frankie's work phone rings and she excuses herself to answer it. At the end of what is an obviously fraught discussion, she explains that the caller, let us call her Jenny, is a Pacifica work colleague who is organising a meeting to be held at the end of that week. Jenny has phoned the proposed presenter that day to discover that he is unable to attend the meeting at such short notice. Now Jenny is phoning Frankie in a panic. What is she to do? Frankie rolls her eyes and comments, "Happens all the time". In the excerpt below, she utilises the notion of failure in relation to cultural deficit.

(There are) not many (Pacific Islanders) in uni (university), so they want to develop like a Pacific Island university because the system, the mainstream universities doesn't suit our people. ... Because like I said today (referring to the phone call with Jenny), most of our staff, like workwise, it's about plan the way Westerners do. It's about you book two, three weeks or five weeks before you actually, you know, get someone to come and speak to you (present at your meeting). No matter how (many) millions of times you tell them, you can't do that. You just can't roll up and say, can you come? With the most educated (Pacific Island) people running the staff, they will fail again. Is it because they need detox or what? I don't know. I don't have an answer for that. ... I think the answer is like, we really need to look, to plan, based on their (our Pacific Island) values, what they think it (will) work, what it works for our people.

Frankie captures a sense of collective culpability and failure in the rhetorical question, "Is it because they need detox or what?" In her view, Pacific Island workers fail because they do not habitually follow norma-

tive planning models “the way Westerners do”. Failure at work is a powerfully negative concept linked to painful feelings of shame, insufficiency and inadequacy (Sennett, 1998:118/133) that disrupt the norms of paid employment. However, a contradictory critique is also alive in Frankie’s expression. She notes failure not only in the Pacifica community but also in the mainstream universities. Justice might be better served, in Frankie’s view, through the establishment of tertiary education and practice modes based on cultural values that work “for our people”. Marion’s expression contains a similar, if stroppier, sense of criticism: “I find myself bridging the gap between our people and Western culture, which makes me angry. Trying to get my managers to understand”. As noted earlier, some of Marion’s anger is projected towards the ethnic collective for a perceived lack of functionality in mainstream workplace contexts, but an equal measure appears to be directed at the marginalisation of specific ethno-cultural repertoires and practices at work.

The sense of grievance expressed by Marion and Frankie mirrors something of Elsie’s opposition to marginalisation, as it was analysed in an earlier section. Their questioning, and some of the more amorphous reflections from other participant voices in this chapter, may not amount to a direct challenge to the normative discourse as such. But it does point in the direction of a developing consciousness of injustice regarding normative workplace practice that dominates, and therefore sidelines, other cultural understandings of ‘how best to practice at work’. In this regard, social work is a specific case because the workers are employed precisely to bridge the gap between cultures. The integration of various ethno-cultural practices is of direct relevance if such modes turn out to be the most productive for social work in ethnic communities. Specific cultural repertoires may also constitute the better option because they have the capacity to generate a sense of cultural performance, achievement and contribution, rather than a sense of failure through comparison with dominant practices. This is a different issue from the broader problem of non-Western cultures lacking ‘fit’ with Western values and modes of behaviour disciplined by the ethics of work, such as punctuality and reliability, which were discussed in Chapter [Six](#).

The Pacific Island workers encountered in this and the previous section, some actively understanding themselves as undertaking the role of bridge

in both the material and cultural sense, mitigate practical inconsistencies in intercultural work tasks in creative ways. However, their inventive practices are more or less unrecognised, either informally by self and others or formally via performance reviews. This circumstance seems to shape a complex blend of cultural culpability and collective grievance that impacts negatively on the norms of work inherent in Honneth's conceptions as they were outlined in the first section of the chapter. The last section of Chapter [Seven](#) will delve specifically into the recognition of performance, its absence, its impacts and struggles for it, in cross-cultural bridging work.

'We Should Be At Senior Caseworker Level By Now': Struggling for Esteem Recognition

The negotiation of practical and cultural gaps, as analysed in the previous three sections, highlights the dilemmas of recognition relations in intercultural workplace functioning, and as well, it draws attention to the recognition of performance at work. This is because the contestation over different cultural approaches to the *modus operandi* of everyday work also holds consequences for the recognition of performance at work and thus job security, promotion, higher pay rates and occupational status, not to mention sense of identity, mental health and subjective well-being in general. This section's focus on the recognition of performance utilises Elsie's case once more for illustrative purposes.

Each year me and Sue (Elsie's Aboriginal co-worker) have to participate in performance reviews where we have to meet certain criteria (to maintain current positions). But the criteria doesn't fit our (community involvement) role. So Sue and me, we have to work harder to get the same (recognition) that others here get. ... So we kinda like have to, for the last month or so I have had to purposely just concentrate on my casework to meet the criteria (for hours), and that's the same for Sue. So that's the dilemma for me and I said it to my manager, I said, "The criteria that we have really sucks because the performance (review), it's only purely based on the casework with our clients. There's no recognition of our community work". ... Actually, quite a few here (colleagues and senior managers) don't even know what we (Sue and me) do (in the community). It's not recognised at all.

This excerpt reveals a struggle for recognition centred on the successful completion of formal performance reviews. Elsie's social work agency is the institutional source of such recognition and as we know, it adheres to managerialist performance management systems that have become normalised in human services and other workplace cultures. Such evaluation systems are designed to 'fit' institutional frameworks and have taken on a generic total quality and quantitative focus (Bay, 2011:223; Dejours, 2014:125–126; White, 2009:129). Their meritocratic objective design precludes the possibilities of measuring and therefore recognising the worker's actual mental input in terms of creative adaptations and human relations (Dejours, 2014:126; Deranty, 2010c:196), especially in intercultural practices even if these are aimed at and do improve workplace efficiency. In that sense, evaluations based strictly on meritocratic criteria can actually decrease efficiency, increase ascriptive bias and reduce equity (Vallas, 2012:129).

In Elsie's work organisation, performance review is based on equitable criteria in the form of numerically specific office-bound casework, documented and signed off in performance appraisal cycles. Given that these criteria do not recognise hours spent engaged in their respective communities, Elsie and Aboriginal co-worker Sue must put in longer hours to get the same casework recognition "that others here get". These two 'ethnic' social workers have little choice but to perform to the criteria because, to do otherwise, is to fail a performance appraisal and undermine their employment. The second consequence of an unsuccessful performance review, the stalling of promotion and raised status, has an arguably more profound effect on Elsie's sense of misrecognised performance, achievement and contribution.

Me and Sue, we should both by now be at senior caseworker level. We both work similar in the way that we know works for our communities, which, as I said, is not all office based but getting out into the community (and) building links with our people. ... We're both highly recognised within our communities and seen as leaders in our communities. But in terms of our jobs here, we're not even given senior status yet. We're having to do more casework in the office just to get that promotion because that's what we're required to do, on paper, for the performance review. ... But I can't do all the casework needed to get the senior

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position and do the community work the way I have (been doing it), unless the agency gives me some hours for it. ... I'm not happy. Sue and I are not happy about it. We want to take it further.

Promotion constitutes a powerful mode of recognition at work, usually conveying both material and symbolic rewards for performance, for having done one's job well. The promotional system at Elsie's work is based on successful performance reviews, with the decisive performance criteria a quantifiable reduction in family violence. As discussed in the earlier section, Elsie's "Pacific Island way" also identifies lowered rates of violence as the definitive goal but from that cultural orientation, recognition of performance includes active and meaningful involvement in community settings. According to Elsie, authentic community engagement is the factor that is most likely to engender higher rates of reporting and thus an eventual reduction in family violence. So for her, promotional failure is related, not necessarily to a lack of quality work, but to the fact that her community-based practice reduces casework hours to a level below that required 'on paper' for promotion to a senior caseworker position. Moreover, the performance management system's lack of recognition of her knowledge of this 'cultural fact' seems to matter more to her than the actual promotion.

It's (the promotion is) not that important to me, but it's just the lack of recognition. And I said (to the manager), "Doesn't it seem funny that in my community I'm seen as a leader, but in here (the workplace), you're saying that I'm not, on paper, a senior". It doesn't matter but that's so clear cut for me that it's almost like it doesn't sit right, it doesn't look right, it doesn't sound right. ... It's doesn't respect how we (Pacific Islanders) do things. But that's just the way it is.

This and the previous excerpt highlight the difference between the social approval or honour accorded Elsie and Sue by their respective communities, 'highly recognised, seen as leaders', and their lowered status at work. The disposition of injustice captured in Elsie's transcripts, and her struggle for recognition of performance and promotion, can be related to the dominance of managerialist performance management systems as described earlier. In her case, the objectively designed meritocratic system

results in the marginalisation of an alternative cultural discourse through which job performance might be assessed and esteemed. While the work organisation recognises her work through formal performance reviews, community respect is forthcoming for Elsie's embodied proactivity in everyday sites, for the facilitation of meaningful connection and for practical care. As noted in Chapters [Five](#) and [Six](#), this cultural repertoire highlights a specific sense of work as social contribution to community care beyond gainful employment.

It is clear from these reflections, and those presented earlier, that Elsie gains an important sense of achievement and contribution, self-esteem and pride through her work performance, *particularly* as it is enacted in culturally relevant practice. Moreover, it is at the level of work colleagues that esteem recognition is likely to be awarded for a worker's creative adaptations to bridge the gap between prescription and actuality. In learning a craft or job, we enter a community consisting of others who practise the relevant skills and it is this community of peers who are thus able to appreciate challenges as they materialise in the lived reality of work processes (Dejours, 2014:124; Svendsen, 2008:43). As noted earlier, the excerpts of other participants in the previous two sections provide little evidence for the existence of collegial admiration, arguably because these cross-cultural workers do not consciously recognise their pragmatic everyday bridging attempts as creative interventions that contribute to the effectiveness of their work. In Elsie's case, while most colleagues and senior managers "don't even know what we do (in the community), it's not recognised at all", she is esteemed for culturally appropriate work practice by her line manager and Aboriginal co-worker and just as importantly by the diaspora community she serves.

This contestation over different cultural interpretations of work practice, involving diverse audiences as sources of esteem recognition, shapes a complex sense of recognition narrative and counter narrative for Elsie. In terms of the norms of work, the shifting between these opposing narratives is best captured in the notion of recognition disjuncture. The disjuncture seems to deepen Elsie's disappointment. Her expression, "That's so clear cut for me that it's almost like it doesn't sit right, it doesn't look right, it doesn't sound right", indicates a felt devaluation, even humiliation, by comparison with colleagues who have already achieved senior

caseworker status. A tendency to downplay the affect associated with devaluation is woven into Elsie's narrative through the use of a minimising vocabulary: "It's *not that* important to me ... it's *just* the lack of recognition ... it doesn't matter *but* ... it's *almost* like it doesn't sit right ... *But* that's just the way it is". Such verbal minimisers point to the intellectualisation of hurt and belittlement in the service of avoiding the conscious experience of vulnerability (Day, 2008:378; Forrester et al., 2012:121; Grover et al., 2013:1717–1718). The sense of recognition disjuncture leads Elsie to the idea of 'ethno-cultural tokenism'.

I almost said the word. I almost said the word to my manager. Tokenism! It's almost tokenistic that we're (Sue and me) actually here. But I don't say it 'cause he knows. He agrees.

The suspicion of tokenism entrenches the experience of disenfranchisement. For Elsie, the idea of herself as token worker seems to cancel out positive collective and collegial recognition and focuses her attention exclusively on the misrecognition narrative. This suggests a negative impact on the positive norms of work and thus on self-esteem, integrity and autonomy. Furthermore, authentic recognition implies mutuality. Mutuality means that, for a worker to experience esteem recognition she, by definition, must respect and esteem the recognising subjects. Given their sense of its greater efficacy, Elsie and Sue are likely to experience the management's ignorance of a community engagement approach as 'insult added to injury'. Elsie's earlier statement, "they don't know what good work is", reveals a lack of reciprocity, indeed a disparaging attitude towards workplace management that may loosen her commitment and loyalty to the organisation. It may also intensify her claims for the recognition of unique cultural performance and the associated promotion to senior caseworker level.

Elsie and her Aboriginal colleague articulate a sense of injustice regarding the non-recognition of hours spent in community engagement, and the resultant lack of promotion: "I'm not happy. Sue and I are not happy about it". In that sense, they appear to reject the normative validity of established procedures and "want to take it further". Their questioning mirrors, to some extent, the more muted sense of misrecognition emer-

gent in participant observations in previous sections. We cannot know if Elsie's and Sue's disappointed recognition claims will develop into a collective will aimed at transforming performance management policy. Under the recognition model, a consciousness of injustice has the potential to develop if concrete social experience is articulated between subjects as has eventuated between these two social workers from minority ethnic groups. From Honneth's perspective, the moral claim holds validity because it constitutes *their* concrete experience of misrecognition and exclusion and, if coordinated at the collective level, may develop into an ethically grounded discourse claiming redress of the injustice experienced (Honneth, 1995f:131–139/160–170, 2007b:87–90).

Conclusion

Utilising the category of 'how one practices at work', Chapter [Seven](#) has investigated (mis)recognition in relation to the concrete practices of multicultural workplaces. Each of its sections elaborated an analytical thread emerging from empirical fieldwork with Pacific Islanders employed in human service organisations. The first of these focused on contestation regarding different practice modes, whereby a managerialist office-based approach differs in significant ways from a Pacific Islands community engagement style. In this regard, a narrative of misrecognition in the workplace context was counter-posed against a narrative of recognition in the client community. The contestation theme anticipated the second analytical thread. Here, Pacifica cross-cultural workers employed a range of mostly taken-for-granted pragmatic adaptations, drawn from unique cultural repertoires, to bridge practical and cultural gaps between the institutional prescription of a task and its everyday implementation. The next thread posed a complex juxtaposition of cultural reproach and collective injury regarding intercultural disparities at work and the largely unrecognised bridging practices of cross-cultural workers. The final analytical thread furthered this theme by establishing some of the implications of contested practice modes and bridging activity for the recognition of work performance. Here, empirical data highlighted a struggle for the recognition of performance, and the associated expectation of promo-

tion, as it emerged through the contestation over different interpretations of best practice at work.

Although uneven and incomplete, running through all four analytical themes is a tendency towards a narrative of misrecognised or invisible cultural practice in the workplace and a counter narrative of esteem recognition within the cultural community itself. This phenomenon is clarified through Honneth's concept of contested value horizon, whereby the interpretations regarding core values of minority ethno-cultural groups are largely submerged within the dominant value horizon, but nevertheless remain meaningful and of significance to the members of these groups. From this perspective, cultural marginalisation related to 'how one practices at work' undermines the norms inherent in his second and third critical models of paid work, that is, that essential sense of achievement and contribution to the mutual exchange of goods and services in the society. In terms of the use of Honneth's first critical model, Dejours' psychodynamics of work has provided further detail for the analysis in this chapter. The self-transformative possibilities generated by the autonomous, expressive, co-operative activity involved in the work of practical and cultural bridging are eroded by the lack of substantial recognition from colleagues, managers and, indeed, from the transcultural workers themselves. Under Honneth's recognition schema, the undermining and erosion of these norms bears negative consequences for the possibilities of self-esteem, self-realisation and autonomy of the workers involved.

Finally, the mostly muted sense of cultural injustice captured in some of the empirical data points towards nascent work-related recognition claims. Honneth's notion of moral struggles for recognition emerging through experiences of injustice is useful for understanding possible developments. He argues that the hegemonic order usually prevents marginalised groups from being heard in the contestation over interpretations of core social values. This is because overlooked groups do not usually possess the symbolic tools that would enable them to reflect on, and voice, experienced injustice. Their moral claims remain mostly hidden, resting on unarticulated and uncoordinated notions of justice. However, recognition claims have the potential to surface when concrete social experience is articulated between members of marginalised groups. The point is that it is the felt moral injury, such as that emergent amongst

some of the research participants alluding to or openly discussing grievances related to ‘how one practices at work’, which fuels impetus for change. If eventually coordinated at the collective level, such claims could develop into an ethno-cultural discourse and movement aiming to challenge and change normative work practice.

Such a movement might aim to include specific ethno-cultural values in workplace recognition. It could promote recognition of the community esteem in which workers are held, precisely for performing appropriate cultural repertoires, in performance reviews. The movement could work to garner legal recognition, specifically the right for culturally specific practices and cultural competence to be recognised and rewarded in human services systems. Such a discourse might also promote active recognition of the cultural repertoire of diaspora community care, as it has been discussed throughout the empirical chapters of this book, to which many of these Pacifica workers make a significant voluntary contribution. These ideas build on Bourdieu’s notion of including social costs, in his sense social suffering (Bourdieu, 1998:39), in work-related decision-making, whereby the cultural costs for minority ethno-cultural groups and workers could also be taken into account in the planning of work systems. These developments would recognise the employees whose voices have been heard in this chapter, in terms of the recognition of individual and collective performance, achievement and contribution through the practices of work. This concludes the empirical section of the book. Chapter [Eight](#), to follow, provides a summary of the research findings and conclusions and offers thoughts regarding further directions.

Chapter Eight

Conclusions and Future Directions

This book began by setting out two related intentions. The first of these was to empirically investigate important questions regarding intercultural recognition and misrecognition in the domain of paid work, specifically taking Honneth's recognition route rather than a more conventional multiculturalism-oriented approach. In pursuing this cross-cultural inquiry through a recognition lens, the book's second intention was to demonstrate the viability and value of Honneth's theory in cross-cultural scholarship. The book thus aims to address deficits in the multiculturalism and recognition arenas, in that there are few applications of the recognition model in the study of cross-cultural phenomena. The first section in this final chapter of the book thus provides a summary of and conclusion to the empirical exploration of (mis)recognition as it is experienced by Pacific Islanders at work in Australia, while the second section addresses the question of the suitability of recognition theory for empirical investigations of this kind. A third section will suggest some avenues for further research that might build on the offerings of this book.

Pacific Islanders and Everyday (Mis)Recognition at Work

Pacifica Workers, Recognition and Misrecognition

Through the analytical categories of 'who one is', 'what one does' and 'how one practises' at work, the book has presented significant empirical findings regarding cross-cultural (mis)recognition at work. The first empirical chapter framed work experience as a social sphere in which recognition and misrecognition regarding ethno-racial identification occur. Mezzo and macro level structures of racial inequality were found to underpin old and new types of everyday ethno-racial marginalisation in workplaces. The analysis discussed some of the workers' responses to the misrecognition of their ethno-racial identity at work, such as self-negation and disempowering shame. But the analysis also identified some of the ways in which Pacifica workers display restorative agency, including righteous indignation, oppositional anger, moral superiority, appeals for bureaucratic intervention, a philosophical stance, humour and particularly for the second generation, career advancement. This last aspect highlights the availability of alternative recognition resources, both within and outside the collective, to which Pacifica workers can turn to stave off the injuries of misrecognition. The analysis demonstrates the vulnerability of workers from minority cultural traditions to ethno-racial misrecognition, and the potentially corrosive effects on the norms of achievement and contribution through work, and the sense of meaningfulness flowing from them.

Chapter Six framed work experience as a social sphere in which recognition and misrecognition of the status of an occupation and its associated tasks occur. The chapter's analysis revealed the uneasy tension between admiration and denigration inherent in the lived reality of occupational stratification for Pacifica workers, who tend to cluster in semi-skilled and manual employment in Australia. This tension is exacerbated by the limitations of structural racialisation and symbolic servility in low-status, poorly remunerated occupational sectors, where the congregation of certain ethnic and migrant groups tends to deepen devaluation in a cyclical process. Furthermore, the ambiguous valorisation of natural abilities was found to undermine the authentic esteem recognition of cul-

tural achievements, to some extent at least. Here, 'natural ethnic ability' often fails to transfer to other, higher-status employment, which requires different cultural aptitudes, mental attitudes and increased responsibility. Social misrecognition then tends to generate self-misrecognition, to which Pacifica people were found to respond with ironic stances, self-disparaging humour and moral claims regarding contribution to the social division of labour. The analysis links the effects of occupational devaluation to limited educational and employment options, youth disaffection and community disadvantage, as entrenched realities in the Pacifica diaspora. A recognition narrative is woven into job market participation in specific cases, whereby the application of self-direction and co-operation in tasks results in pride in accomplishment and contribution. But misrecognition of occupational status and occupational tasks holds greater resonance, significantly eroding the norms of autonomous performance, meaningful achievement and, in particular, contribution to the exchange of goods and services in the society.

The final empirical chapter framed work experience as a social sphere in which recognition and misrecognition regarding the concrete practices of the work organisation occur. Here, the analysis located contested modes of practice in human services work, where the dominance of a managerialist approach rubs up against, and marginalises to a significant extent, a 'Pacific Islands way of doing things'. This narrative of misrecognition in the workplace context is counter-posed against a narrative of esteem recognition in the client community. The analysis also located a range of culturally differentiated strategies employed by Pacifica workers to bridge practical and cultural gaps between the institutional prescription of a work task and its everyday implementation. However, the self-development possibilities engendered by the expressive, co-operative, autonomous activity involved in the performance of these pragmatic adaptations, as well as an accompanying sense of achievement and contribution, are potentially eroded through the lack of substantial recognition by colleagues, work organisations and, indeed, by the cross-cultural workers themselves. A complex juxtaposition of cultural reproach and collective injury was identified amongst the Pacifica workers, regarding the disparities emergent in their intercultural work and the largely unrecognised practices they undertake to bridge those gaps. The chapter also

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identified some of the implications of contested modes of practice and transcultural bridging activity for the recognition of work performance and promotion. Here, the analysis revealed negative responses to disappointed expectations of recognition and forms of resistance expressed by workers from within the collective in terms of interests and rights, as well as an emergent contestation of the dominant value traditions of their employment.

In summary, we find a complex uneasy juxtaposition of misrecognition and recognition in the intercultural relations of paid work for Pacifica people in Australia. A narrative of recognition is identifiable in individual resistance to ethno-racial and occupational misrecognition, in societal valorisation of cultural strengths, as well as in largely invisible workplace practices which are, nevertheless, often esteemed within the cultural community itself. However, the various modes of misrecognition at work, identified in ethno-racial devaluation, unequal access to occupational capital and unrecognised alternative cultural practices and aptitudes, were found to hold greater resonance. The analysis links such misrecognition at work to powerful racial structures and dominant discourses, which shape unequal access to the societal value horizon and thus the marginalisation of alternative cultural interpretations of core values and the acquisition of work-related esteem recognition. In other words, the book argues that submersion in the dominant value horizon negatively influences everyday workplace relations of recognition experienced by members of the Pacifica diaspora. It identifies some of the specific consequences of that submersion, that is, some of the practical means whereby these subjects' particular understandings of social norms are marginalised in the situated contexts of everyday work life, the corrosive effects on the norms of performance, achievement and contribution through work and therefore, following Honneth, on the preconditions of self-esteem, self-realisation and autonomy, and the group's sense of social solidarity.

It is true that modern capitalism and Western law have engendered greater formal equality than that which exists in many traditional societies. However, this book empirically demonstrates that informal inequality endures in Australia's multicultural workplaces. Such inequality persists through social structures, which disrupt the fair distribution of esteem recognition related to the norms of paid work, thus potentially

diminishing the possibilities of self-realisation and autonomous agency for workers from minority ethno-cultural traditions. Specifically, these social structures undergird ethno-racial denigration, a racialised and stratified occupational recognition order and the devaluation of different cultural formations, which do not quite fit with ascendant interpretations of worthwhile occupations and the aptitudes required to succeed in them. Such structures also underrate alternative cultural repertoires and everyday cultural and practical bridging activity, which goes more or less unnoticed as performance, achievement and contribution worthy of social esteem recognition at work.

The issues raised here pose a significant challenge to mainstream multicultural theory, policy and practice, both in terms of the marginalisation of minority groups and the wider problem of social integration, particularly via the labour market, in ethnically and culturally diverse societies. Thus far, there seems little in the way of political will or cultural measure, which might address the types of intercultural misrecognition that have been identified through this research. It could be that future amelioration will come from the ethno-cultural groups themselves, in the form of an emergent social movement specifically focused on the arrangements of cross-cultural work. The research fieldwork located forms of nascent contestation in a sense of cultural injustice regarding legitimate contribution and work practices. If co-ordinated at the collective and political levels, these might begin to challenge the dominant interpretations of what counts as esteem-worthy employment. However, it is true that Honneth's account may not attribute sufficient weight to the way in which recuperative strategies, adopted by members of ethnic minorities to insulate them from psychological and social damage, weaken the likelihood of them challenging the underlying sources of that damage and thus undermine the potential for collective action to challenge the existing recognition order.

In this regard, the norm of contribution to the social commons, well beyond adequately remunerated employment, emerges as particularly significant in the book's research. It seems that the lack of symbolic valuation of reciprocal contribution to the social division of labour, specifically through ethno-racial denigration, devaluation of participation in racialised low-status occupations and marginalised cultural practices, is

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more disturbing in this diaspora community than misrecognition of contribution through low wage rates, despite relative socio-economic disadvantage. This finding supports Honneth's argument that struggles for economic redistribution are best interpreted within the experience of social disrespect, as a specific mode of struggle for recognition "in which dispute is about the appropriate evaluation of individuals' or groups' social contributions" (Honneth, 2004:353).

Indeed, the valuation of mutual provision in the organised productive process seems to underlie a different interpretation of what contribution means. The research found a specific sense of work as social contribution, outside of gainful employment, which is highly valued in the Pacific Islands diaspora. Whether acting individually or through various non-government organisations, churches and community associations, many of the Pacifica people encountered during fieldwork put in many unpaid hours of time and effort in work that can be regarded as community care. What is more, many workers who are gainfully employed in mainstream contexts, such as health, education, social work and employment consultancy, use the skills developed in these contexts to enhance this mode of 'working for the community to make the community work'. Certainly for some, paid employment activities extend more or less seamlessly into voluntary work. This cultural repertoire may be associated with a sense of solidarity emerging through a common historical experience of marginalisation. Nevertheless, it brings social rewards in terms of 'doing something for others' in the ethical or Christian sense and in terms of contributing to the ethno-cultural collective and its well-being in the wider society. Furthermore, in garnering esteem recognition from this alternative diaspora audience, voluntary contribution may also compensate for the injuries of misrecognition, which may be experienced in the broader world of work.

It is somewhat ironical that while recognition disjuncture potentially complicates or erodes the norms of paid work for many Pacific Islanders, in this mode of voluntary community care the performative aspects of work activity (expression, co-operation, self-direction), individual achievement, mutuality of contribution and meaningfulness in terms of satisfying the obligations one owes others through labour exchange seem to come to fruition, to some degree at least. It is understandable, but

again paradoxical, that this significant cultural interpretation of what contribution means, seemingly prized in the Pacific Islands community itself, tends to become invisible or taken for granted by Pacifica people when they look beyond the diaspora, assess themselves against the Australian mainstream work community and note their reputation as a 'problem migrant community'. Indeed, the priorities of a substantial ethic of community care sit uneasily alongside the mainstream work-related value horizon, where individual educational and occupational advancement often 'takes up the most room' in subjective life. The tensions underlie, to some extent, generational rifts known to exist in the Pacifica diaspora. This overlooking or minimal self-recognition in the migrant community, and marginal or token appreciation in the wider community, compounds misrecognition given the contribution voluntary care work in the diaspora potentially makes to subjective integration and also broader social integration, from which all citizens in the society benefit.

Social Integration and the Critical Importance of Recognition at Work

The analysis of intercultural (mis)recognition experienced by Pacifica workers, summarised above, is anchored in Honneth's critical conceptions of paid work and developments of them by theorists writing in the field of recognition and work. These models establish recognition at work as bearing crucial consequences for self-realisation and autonomy, specifically through esteem recognition of the worker's performance in grappling with the realities of concrete work activities, of the worker's accomplishments through work and of the worker's contribution to the social organisation of labour. Critical analysis is thus related to the various norms of work located in these three critical conceptions, including self-expression, co-operation, self-direction, achievement, contribution, adequate financial reward and meaningful work.

The critical importance of endorsing forms of recognition, regarding these norms of work, is clarified through the two related concepts that underpin Honneth's notion of esteem recognition in the cultural realm. The first concept comprises the idea that, in the sphere of social solidarity

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particularly the domain of paid work, a subject develops a sense of self-esteem, which contributes to the attainment of self-realisation and autonomy (Honneth, 1995f:121–130, 2010). And under Honneth's Hegelian intersubjective emphasis, self-esteem is contingent on the ongoing reception of social esteem, of being recognised by other subjects particularly for work performance, achievements and contributions to the social good. To apply a pattern of intersubjective recognition at the societal level, Honneth suggests the notion of value horizon, that is, the cultural understandings of a society's ideals, as the medium that provides the criteria for social worthiness. Here Honneth's second key concept, that of contestation amongst value interpretations of fundamental principles, comes into play. The modern organisation of social esteem produces permanent tensions because, in post-traditional societies characterised by value pluralism, a definitive system of commonly held value convictions is not feasible. In the ensuing contestation, it is the leading groups' interpretations of core norms, which tend to prevail in the reference system via which an individual's performance, achievements and contributions are assessed. Social worthiness accorded worker subjects through symbolic measures such as peer admiration, public gratitude, media visibility, reputations and titles and practical measures such as pay rates, employment packages, work conditions and promotion is thus understood as reflecting mainstream value positions.

These concepts, constituting the theoretical foundations of this book, provide descriptive, explanatory and normative force for its critical analysis of intercultural (mis)recognition experienced by workers from a minority ethno-cultural group. Based as it is in a Critical School ethos, Honneth's is a negativistic methodology, which encompasses in the first instance experiences of injustice or misrecognition. The misrecognition of workers from minority cultural traditions, either through ethno-racial denigration, unequal access to occupational capital or unrecognised alternative cultural practices and aptitudes at work, is ethically unjust because it impedes or erodes the development of self-esteem, and therefore, psychological and cultural opportunities to realise the autonomous self. The unrestricted opportunity for all subjects in a society to develop self-realisation and autonomy is the ultimate point of Honneth's theory.

By this, Honneth (2001:50–51) means the ability of subjects to freely choose their own goals in life and to work towards them with minimal hindrance from internal psychological inhibitions in the form of damaged self-relations, as well as from external pressures and structural constraints. Honneth's point, which needs special emphasis here, is that the development of healthy identity, positive self-relations and autonomy, that is subjective integration, depends on the structural conditions which engender endorsing forms of intersubjective love, rights and esteem recognition. And as far as esteem recognition is concerned, Honneth upholds the domain of work as primary in subjective integration and also therefore in social integration.

As described in Chapter [Four](#), Honneth understands the work domain as underwriting subjective and social integration. Work serves as a specific sphere of subjective integration *because* it relies on normative moral principles *and because* it facilitates transformative possibilities and the development of self-realisation and autonomy. The book has empirically demonstrated some of the ways in which intercultural misrecognition is problematic for workers from minority ethnic and cultural groups, disrupting or eroding the integrative potential of work at the individuating level. Based on the same normative and transformative principles, participation in the organised labour process also holds potential for integration at the societal level. In other words, as well as inhibiting the development of autonomous agency and subjective integration, misrecognition at work has potential disintegrative consequences for a society. While the argument here does not go so far as to claim a solid empirically based connection in this regard, it suggests a link, which has two dimensions.

Firstly, from Honneth's theoretical perspective, the subjective meaningfulness that can emerge through work has a crucial social dimension. This is the meaningfulness that is specifically related to a sense of social contribution, of understanding one's work as socially valuable, indeed socially necessary. Furthermore, this sense of meaningfulness overlaps with Dejours' notion that one is contributing to the positive transformation of the world through work (Dejours, 2014). These understandings are constitutive in developing and anchoring social connectedness or solidarity, those social bonds that are essential for society's integration and

reproduction (Honneth, 2010). Of course there are tensions between different levels of social integration. Ethnic minorities may be functionally integrated into the economy through dual labour markets, but poorly integrated socially and culturally due to disrespect experienced in the domain of work and beyond. Thus non-recognition or misrecognition is deleterious because it has the potential to diminish the sense of meaningfulness, which ideally arises from understanding one's work as contributing to the common good. Such corrosion may be particularly socially disintegrative when the common good is that of the multicultural nation, and migrants' motivations to become successful, productive, contributing citizens are strong.

The second socially disintegrative dimension of misrecognition at work concerns the destabilisation of the legitimacy of social institutions. Social integration depends on a complex mix of elements, one being the validity and acceptability of a society's key institutions. From a recognition theory perspective, a fundamental function of esteem recognition through work is the establishment of the practical self-relation of self-esteem, which, together with self-confidence and self-respect, leads to the development of subjective integration and autonomous agency. It is the fulfilment of this function, and its associated norms, that reassure the subjects in a modern society of "the legitimacy of the basic institutions that regulate their interaction" (Smith, 2012c:93). With such a guarantee, social subjects offer their allegiance, or at least 'enough allegiance', to the primary social institutions to enable them to function properly. It is easy to consider the ways in which the erosion of the preconditions of subjective integration and autonomy, the consequences of misrecognition at work as argued in this book, might lead the worker subjects and communities so affected to lose confidence in society's institutional frameworks and the norms that uphold them. Such a loss of trust in the legitimacy of social institutions, on the part of marginalised ethnic groups and individuals from minority cultural traditions, has obvious disintegrative consequences for a social body, potentially disrupting solidarity and wearing away the national unity, which binds that body together.

In conclusion, this project has brought together the themes of recognition, multiculturalism and work to present critical insights and arguments regarding the intercultural relations of recognition experienced by mem-

bers of an ethnic minority group in Australia. The sense that to some extent these cross-cultural relations are characterised by social pathology, to use Honneth's term (Honneth, 2007c), points to the critical emancipatory impetus at the heart of this study. This impetus, embraced by Honneth and everyday multiculturalists, is concerned with groups and individuals from different ethno-cultural traditions seeking social recognition, and thus self-esteem, self-realisation and autonomy, which is mediated by dominant interpretations of worthwhile performance, achievement and contribution in the domain of paid work. The recognition relations of paid employment matter because work is a crucial sphere in which social bonds, that sense of acting for one another, contribute significantly to subjective integration and the integration of multicultural society.

Ultimately, Honneth's project is concerned with 'post-traditional democratic ethical life' (Honneth, 1995f:175, 2014). He envisages a just society, one in which "recognitive conditions for freedom are met" in the realms of intersubjective self-understandings, norms, social practices and institutions (Lysaker & Jakobsen, 2015a:2). His ethical idea is that human beings, regardless of their differences, seek to become self-realised as emotionally literate, morally accountable and uniquely able individuals, and these dimensions are developed through adequate mutual intersubjective love, respect and esteem recognition. With the experience of such recognition, the citizens of a polity are likely to develop the self-relations, attitudes and norms that facilitate critical democratic engagement, which makes individual self-realisation and autonomy socially and politically relevant (Lysaker & Jakobsen, 2015a:4). Finally, Honneth understands democracy in post-traditional terms, in that the polity will encompass a multiplicity of moral values and cultural identities (Honneth, 2007d). In highlighting various aspects and dynamics of (mis)recognition in intercultural relations of recognition, this book embraces these ideals as worth pursuing.

Recognition Theory and Intercultural Scholarship

Recognition theory has proved to be a fruitful means of bringing descriptive, explanatory and normative strength to this inquiry into an important social question, that is, recognition and misrecognition at work as it

is experienced by and affects members of a minority ethno-cultural tradition. The book's intention was to conduct its intercultural analysis through a recognition lens rather than a more conventional multiculturalism approach. Thus, while utilising a rich literature drawn from various disciplinary fields to support its arguments, the central framework and conceptual grammar of the project has rested on Honneth's theoretical premises. This section of the concluding chapter provides some evaluative commentary regarding the use of recognition theory in multicultural scholarship, particularly as undertaken from an everyday research perspective. Much of what follows has already been discussed in the book, but it is presented here in the sense of assembling the main arguments supporting the application of recognition theory in intercultural research, where little attention has been paid to it in the past.

Through a focus on the relations of recognition in the sphere of social esteem at work, particularly in their negativistic form, Honneth's theory provides a more sophisticated approach to intercultural recognition than that typically assumed in the multiculturalism literature. As explicated in the theoretical section of the book, recognition theory and classical multiculturalism are both founded on a 'culturalist' model of social integration, culture designating the normative and symbolic resources through which subjective identities are shaped. However, classical multiculturalist perspectives are premised on the existence of pre-determined racial, ethnic and cultural identities and culturally distinctive lifestyles, on the basis of which individuals are defined and participate in social interactions, even if identities are adapted and modified over time through interaction in the dynamic everyday world. The issue here is that, under multiculturalism, these distinctive identities and cultures are viewed as separate from the wider social realm and in need of inclusion so as to establish and maintain the cohesion of culturally diverse societies. Recognition theory circumvents some of the limitations such a framing brings, such as a reductive or idealised view of ethno-cultural identity and the reconciliation of equality and rights universalism with the accommodation of distinctive group identities. This is because, in contrast to multiculturalist claims for the recognition of an already defined identity, Honneth's concept of identity designates the deep, psychological, existential sense of self that subjects develop in their social dependency. This understanding

establishes mutual intersubjective recognition as constitutive in the very formation and structure of identity.

Mutual intersubjective recognition, that is, positive reciprocal acknowledgement between subjects, plays an essential role in the development of core identity and positive self-relations, and therefore self-realisation and effective human agency, because of the intrinsic dependence of subjective formation upon this acknowledgement by others. The core self-relations of self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem are those modes in which a subject relates to herself or himself, and which must be minimally positive for the subject to be able to engage with the life-world. As Honneth argues, "Without the assumption of a certain measure of self-confidence, of legally enshrined autonomy and of a belief in one's ability, it is impossible to imagine a successful process of self-realization" (Honneth, 2001:50–51). Love, rights and esteem, in the intimate, legal and cultural realms of interpersonal and social interaction respectively, represent the three specific forms of mutual intersubjective recognition through which, ideally, positive self-relations are developed and maintained. Thus recognition theory, psychologically oriented as it is, rests on Honneth's assumption that prior to cognition there is a fundamental experience of intersubjective recognition. It is this assumption that provides a normative standard by which social relations, in the case of multiculturalism cross-cultural social relations, can be judged wanting.

Furthermore, rather than the multiculturalist understanding of culture as distinctive lifestyle, Honneth theorises culture as the way in which particular groups interpret the fundamental ideals shared by all groups in a society. Culture does, therefore, designate distinctive lifestyles and modes of self-realisation, but in the form of the specific content of the collective interpretations and moral claims, intermingled and internally debated as these are in culturally plural societies, which different social groups and classes bring to the contestation of a society's value horizon. Conflict centred on cultural values is thus conceived of as competition regarding different interpretations of a society's normative and symbolic order, a phenomenon captured in the key concept of contested value horizon. From this perspective, notions regarding multicultural reconciliation and cohesion are inadequate because the value horizon is understood as permanently contested. Overall, Honneth sees social integration

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as intrinsically unstable, a fragile balance between diverse groups with differing levels of access to real and symbolic power in their competing interpretations of society's over-arching ideals.

Honneth's unique conceptions of identity, culture and contested value horizon provide a valid and viable means of analysing intercultural relations. As this book has demonstrated, the theoretical link between recognition as social esteem, particularly at work, and modes of self-realised autonomy provides an important resource for critiquing cross-cultural respect and disrespect. This argument is clarified through a comparison between legal and esteem recognition. In the sphere of rights recognition, the positive practical self-relation of self-respect is founded on the equal legal recognition accorded all citizens in modern liberal democracies, purely on account of their personhood. Along with all other subjects, members of marginalised groups receive equal legal recognition across many dimensions of social life. There might be aspects of their lives on which the law remains silent or engenders their under-representation, for instance, in terms of their religious practices or rights to traditional lands, but in most other dimensions the rights of members of minority collectives are protected under the same legal umbrella as all others.

However, recognition is not distributed as equally in the sphere of esteem recognition. This is because the societal value horizon is dominated by the, at least partly identifiable, interests and interpretations of certain groups. It is the views of these ascendant groups that influence the majority or mainstream views, while the alternative understandings of other groups are more submerged. With the prevailing interpretations shaping devalued social attitudes towards marginalised social groups, it is likely that their members will have less access to esteem recognition and symbolic status and therefore fewer opportunities for the development and sustenance of self-esteem and creative self-transformation. Thus social esteem awarded for individual performance, achievement and contribution, especially as they are demonstrated in the domain of work, constitutes an inherently uneven allocation. Although the hierarchy of occupations and achievements is itself open for contestation, the fact that some identity features and achievements linked to social contribution through work are valued more than others seems to be an irreducible one. As Thompson (2009:60) argues, the principle of esteem is not realisable

if “the dominant set of cultural values does not give all individuals, whatever their form of self-realisation, an opportunity to contribute to societal goals”. This makes the asymmetrical power relations that shape the contestation of a mediating value horizon a crucial matter for critical multicultural studies. In this regard, Honneth’s concept of contested value horizon, in the sphere of esteem recognition, is a significant theoretical resource for critical analysis of the structures of domination and subordination as they influence intercultural relations of recognition.

In investigating the marginalisation of an ethno-cultural group’s particular moral claims, critical analysis based on Honneth’s model can reveal the damaging consequences of that exclusion for the sense of social merit developed by the group’s members, particularly in the sphere of work, their cultural and psychological opportunities for self-realisation and autonomy, the group’s sense of social solidarity and the wider prospects of social integration. In that sense, the call is not for multicultural inclusion as such, but for a minority group’s fair opportunity to compete for the inclusion of their group-specific interpretations of core societal ideals in the value horizon that mediates social esteem. Furthermore, recognition theory offers sophisticated diagnostic resources, for example in the sociology of depression or social violence, regarding the sense of isolation or ill-being experienced by individuals from marginalised social groups. Critical attention can also turn to forms of resistance and struggle, which emerge from within suppressed collectives regarding their contestation of hegemonic value traditions. Honneth understands such struggles as inevitable but potentially productive, in the sense that subjective experience of non-recognition or misrecognition, disrespect to use Honneth’s general term, can in some circumstances provide the personal and collective basis of action which sometimes leads to a progressive social movement.

Let us now turn more specifically towards the everyday multiculturalism approach, as it was utilised in this project. From the perspective of everyday multiculturalism, which as discussed in Chapter [Three](#) has some commonalities with Honneth’s approach, the notion of contested value horizon might seem to be founded on an overly fixed notion of subjectivity and collectivity. The everyday perspective questions the existence of coherent, identifiable value systems that belong consistently to a single

ethnic or cultural group. While 'value threads' are discernible, often with long ethnic, cultural or religious roots, these threads are understood as taking embodied form and expression relationally in modern diverse societies. Collective lifestyles intertwine and evolve through intercultural contact, their formation shaped by a complex mix of reflexive and pre-reflexive intentions. In analyses of transcultural relations and action, everyday multiculturalism research seeks to address these myriad crosscut discourses, permeable identifications and 'situated subjectivities'. In this regard Noble (2009a:877/884) poses the question, "What does it mean to be recognised?", noting that questions of visibility and legitimacy are complex and multifarious.

This everyday multiculturalism orientation is, in fact, compatible with the recognition model. Honneth understands group interpretations of core norms as porous and overlapping frameworks of orientation, originating in particular socio-cultural histories but taking shape in modern societies under the influence of cultural plurality. However, the idea that group interpretations represent fluid, overlapping sets of values does not mean that some kind of interpretative regime cannot be identified, provisional as this might be, and its power to shape collective and subjective values detailed and analysed. Indeed, the findings of this research reveal specific interpretations of core norms, which the Pacifica respondents understand as belonging to 'their' ethno-cultural perspective and which they also perceive as influencing their practice and performance at work. Regarding the subjective level of analysis, Honneth understands the members of cultural groups as aligning with a cultural tradition in varying degrees of attachment and solidarity, with the alignment continuously shaped by the specifics and contextual contingencies of subjective lives and times. Moreover, Honneth offers the theoretical means of critically analysing the psychosocial conditions of recognition that impact positively and negatively on those specifics and contingencies in normative terms, that is, 'as morally right or wrong'.

Relatedly, everyday multiculturalism scholars who have utilised Honneth's theoretical premises tend to view his recognition model as insufficiently elaborated for empirical research into the specific dynamics of intercultural encounter. For example, Noble (2009a:879/884) argues that Honneth's main focus is the philosophical and moral dimensions of

recognition, as part of the development of a high order normative framework for a critical social theory. While Honneth's configuration of three recognition spheres is useful, the theory does not provide sufficient conceptual delineation for application in the diverse places and spaces of everyday life. Thus in Noble's view, Honneth's theory cannot address the context and process, spatiality and temporality, of grounded recognition relations with the sensitivity that, for example, Goffman offers through his everyday sociological concept of social setting. This critique does point to the necessity of complementing Honneth's framework. Researchers who utilise his recognition model, which is indeed proposed at a high level of abstraction so as to define the normative structural conditions of human self-realisation, are required to devise workable micro level and middle level conceptual categories through which to analyse relations of recognition in their life-world multidimensionality. The analytical framework developed to present the research findings of this project represents one such attempt to bridge Honneth's conceptual precepts and their empirical application, in this case in the realm of the intercultural workplace.

Applied with suitable mid-level conceptual elaboration, Honneth's approach can be a useful complement for research into everyday multiculturalism. Intercultural subjectivity does indeed involve multiple identities, takes shape relationally and is framed by a permeable collectivity. However, it also remains a fact of social life that dominating groups and classes impose their interpretations of core social norms onto other groups and classes. A critical perspective on the larger political discourses, ideological narratives and institutional structures within which embodied experience takes place is thus vital for intercultural research motivated by an emancipatory ethos. In this endeavour, Honneth's critical concept of contested value horizon, as discussed above, is useful because it maintains in view the structural forces that shape ethno-cultural inclusion and exclusion in everyday life. Cross-cultural analysis is able to address the over-arching system of ascendant and marginalised value interpretations, the fluidity of grounded recognition relations and the complex connections between them. As inferred above, this approach requires intercultural researchers to flesh out the substantive content of different cultural interpretations of core social norms and to provide detailed accounts of

value horizon conflicts as they emerge in the particular dynamics of everyday cross-cultural engagement.

Avoiding the essentialist and idealist assumptions of classical multiculturalism and in sympathy with the ethos of everyday multiculturalism, the recognition model provides significant descriptive, explanatory and normative resources for critical multiculturalism scholarship. Honneth finds the development of healthy identity, positive self-relations and therefore autonomous subjectivity on the conditions that engender adequate intersubjective recognition in various spheres of life. Empirical intercultural inquiry framed by the relations of recognition can therefore be sensitive to non-recognition and misrecognition as profound sources of subjective disturbance and moral injury. As Smith (2012c:90) argues in relation to the sphere of work, recognition theory “offers the prospect of a phenomenologically more nuanced critique ... one that is more attuned to the structure of moral disappointment and sense of grievance within it—as well as a more complex conception of what emancipation might mean”.

Looking to the Future

The important findings of this book, summarised in the earlier section of the chapter, invite further research. Some thoughts are offered here regarding future intercultural inquiry that could build on the findings, as well as some ways in which cross-cultural research might extend a recognition lens into spheres beyond work. During the project itself, a number of future research possibilities presented themselves. For example, Chapter [Five](#)’s analysis of ethno-racial denigration in the labour domain focused on the experience of Pacifica workers understanding themselves as members of a visible minority in Australia. A future study might expand the investigation of the psychosocial ruptures of this mode of misrecognition to include the experience of, and impacts on, the other subjects to a workplace encounter. Moreover, beyond ethno-racial phenomena, research might be centred more widely on all modes of (mis)recognition in intercultural encounter at work, identifying psychosocial complexity and relational nuance in regard to multiple participants. This type of research would bring a fuller picture into view, potentially deep-

ening understanding of the two-way recognition dynamics as they emerge at work and connect to larger social structures.

In Chapter [Six](#), analysis touched on recognition and the influence of migrant generational differences on occupational categories, work-related cultural repertoires and community integration more generally. While significant research on generational themes exists in the Australian multiculturalism literature (Bottomley, 1991; Colombo, 2010; Harris, A., 2010; Lee, 2007, 2011; Noble, 2007, 2009a; Noble et al., 1999; Tabar, 2009), in-depth inquiry specifically encompassing Pacifica people would help to develop insights into substantial generational differences in relation to work values and integration in that community. This could perhaps take the form of a comparative ethnology between White Anglo values regarding work and traditional cultural repertoires of work in Pacific Island homelands. It might aim to identify the ways in which difference shapes generational patterns in diaspora communities, as well as the emergence of new cultural responses. With a specific focus on work and recognition, this type of research could contribute to the field of transnational studies, where there is interest in the multiplicity of flows between migrants, their homelands and their places of settlement (Lee, 2011:303).

Given the negative effects of unemployment in the Pacifica diaspora, the analysis of occupational (mis)recognition also calls for research into recognition and unemployment. Unemployment is a highly concerning issue of (mis)recognition, social justice and subjective and societal integration and one that begs a recognition-oriented treatment. Excluded from paid work and therefore from important sources of social esteem, the unemployed subject's opportunities to develop self-esteem, self-realisation and autonomy are potentially reduced. Inquiry could focus on this issue from the perspective of the Pacifica collective and other ethno-cultural groups, or extend its brief to focus on relations of recognition and a lack of gainful employment more generally. Furthermore, the disproportional rate of suicide alluded to by Pacifica people in this project calls for investigation into the connections between serious mental ill health, suicide and work in Australia, especially in poorer communities. In particular, a study drawing on the psychodynamics of work (Dejours, 2014) might investigate the ways in which the forms of cross-cultural

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misrecognition highlighted in this inquiry compound the potential pathogenic effects of work. In addition, Chapter [Seven](#)'s focus on cross-cultural workers' pragmatic attempts to bridge practical and cultural gaps between job prescription and job implementation calls for further research to comprehend, more specifically, these phenomena in terms of work practices, (mis)recognition and self-development.

While this study delineated and analysed different modes of cross-cultural (mis)recognition at work, further research could bring a more detailed focus to the ways in which these modes impact differently on the various self-relations and norms of work. This would be to add to the small everyday multiculturalism literature, identified in Chapter [Three](#), specifically focused on the sphere of gainful employment to which this book contributes. There are also productive possibilities in cross-cultural research that compares (mis)recognition at work across different communities and nations. For example, Diversity Council Australia (2014) reports evidence of a 'bamboo ceiling', which sees Asian-born workers significantly under-represented in corporate leadership roles. It also reports evidence of negative cultural stereotyping and pressure on Asian-born workers in the business community to conform to "existing, inherently 'Anglo' leadership styles". Other possibilities include a comparative study into the ways in which relations of recognition are experienced by minority groups across different occupational categories, for example, craft-based labour, caring services and the professions. An inquiry into everyday intercultural relations of recognition and upward occupational mobility, involving Bourdieu's concepts of cultural capital and habitus, might also bring new insights in terms of class mobility, work and subjectivity.

Scholarly inquiry could also compare the formation of different groups' interpretations of core values regarding paid employment. Such studies might elaborate the ways in which work-related values discourses and repertoires influence one another within social structures, as well as the means whereby employment-related symbolic and social boundaries are formed and transformed. In this regard, Lamont and Molnár (2002) suggest that symbolic boundaries are more likely to generate social boundaries when they are drawn in opposition to one privileged group as opposed to multiple, often competing marginalised groups. In the Australian con-

text, and building on Gibson's research (Gibson, 2010a, 2010b), there is further scope to investigate Aboriginal conceptions of work and recognition. Furthermore, given the Pacifica cultural repertoire of freely contributed work as community care, identified in this research, it would be worthwhile to conduct an exploration of the notion of contribution in terms of paid and voluntary work using Honneth's recognition model. Following Ng and Sears (2010), an investigation could seek to determine altruistic and social values amongst Australian ethnic minorities compared with majority Whites, the ways in which voluntary contribution is recognised and understood in these ethno-cultural groups, and the links between this cultural repertoire and the socio-economic situation of diaspora communities.

Beyond the sphere of work, Honneth's recognition model could be utilised to investigate modes of cross-cultural recognition and misrecognition in different life-world domains. For example, the need for a recognition focus on transcultural schooling in Australia emerges from this work-related research. To a large extent, educational performance shapes future occupational accomplishment and status, and in that sense is potentially critical for positive self-relations derived from social esteem. Ethno-cultural practices play a role in patterning and sustaining school achievement, as Watkins and Noble (2008) have demonstrated in an Australian context. For some ethno-cultural groups, educational outcomes and employment options are significant locations of denigration and disaffection, and potentially of struggles for equal status in the moral community. This is an important issue which requires further attention. To return to the recognition schema itself, Honneth's concepts of self-identity and intersubjectivity encapsulate great complexity. In-depth research is needed to unravel some of that complexity, to discern in detail the various ways in which different forms of intersubjective interaction influence the concrete development of positive and negative self-relations in the different recognition spheres, as well as the precise dynamics of such interactions in the here and now of recognition relations in the everyday world.

Finally, research into relations of recognition experienced by workers from other minority ethnic collectives would build on the findings of the book. This study has established valid knowledge and societal significance

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regarding recognition and misrecognition as experienced by Pacifica workers in particular Australian locales. Its findings are thus based on one case. However, we can easily envisage the extension of the findings' explanatory validity, for instance, if we use Yin's extended case study logic as it was clarified in Chapter [Three](#). Each Pacifica participant in this study, conceived of as an individual case, contributed new material, which added to but also generated refinement of thematic threads already noted. In this way, the research accumulated a set of themes, and also progressively revealed contradictions, complexities and nuances of significance within those themes, until a point of thematic saturation came into view (Yin, 2014). Following on the same logic, new research would be likely to accumulate further significant insights regarding the underlying mechanisms of recognition and misrecognition as experienced by workers from other minority cultural traditions. We would then be in a position to compare, extend, refine and contest the themes located by this book's research. As Crouch and Mckenzie (2006:496) put it, the value of such research lies in it being embedded in a relevant field "tended by communal knowledge-building labour". In this way, a scholarly field of knowledge develops.

The Last Word

Garnered during ethnographic fieldwork, it is easy to recall the voices of the Pacific Island participants echoing through this book. Maria relating 'the darker side' of everyday work tasks, Elsie's dawning comprehension of stereotyping in the police car yard and her frustration regarding promotion at work, Makere's feisty responses to ethno-racial disrespect, Lucy's husband's surprise on discovering his new work role as a train station cleaner, Susan's humorous quip 'teacher aide but not the teacher', Ben lazily guitar-strumming as he acknowledges a disjunction between the social valuing of Pacifica people's musical abilities and the failure to transfer that to other employment spheres, Connie's uneasy 'island time Island time' sigh as she and other human service workers attempt to negotiate the mismatch between institutional expectations and intercultural realities at work, and Mere's sense of defeat in failing to produce an adequate written proposal for a sports coaching programme. We can recall, also, from the introduc-

tory chapter, Kate's encouragement to her husband to seek internal cultural comparison as a way of at least partially resolving an enduring sense of depreciation regarding educational and occupational status.

That story of a veiled sense of shame, of 'not measuring up' to Western value traditions, first illuminated the threads of this book. Indeed, it raised some of the critical questions regarding recognition, work and intercultural relations, which this study has explored. Kate's husband and the many other Pacifica participants whose narratives are included bring the human side of (mis)recognition at work to life, reminding us that, in the first instance, recognition and misrecognition are wholly human experiences which vitally matter for the well-being of subjects from minority ethno-cultural traditions. It is their experiences of cross-cultural respect and disrespect at work that this book ultimately honours. Those experiences have become empirically meaningful, indeed they are at the heart of things, because they have been analysed through the lens of what Axel Honneth (1995f:131) names, "an indissoluble connection between, on the one hand, the unassailability and integrity of human beings and, on the other hand, the approval of others".

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